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Editors
FREDA KIRCHWEY MAX LERNER

Literary Editor *Associate Editor*
MARGARET MARSHALL MAXWELL S. STEWART

Dramatic Critic
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Publisher
FREDA KIRCHWEY

Hugo Van Arx, Business Manager. Walter F. Grueninger, Circulation Manager. Muriel C. Gray, Advertising Manager.

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The Shape of Things

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AS THE PRESIDENT'S TRAIN SWINGS THROUGH the Western states, several things grow clearer than they were before. First, the President has lost little if any of his popularity among the common people, despite the frenzied newspaper assaults on him. Secondly, the issue of Justice Black does not loom large enough in the West to enter into political calculations, however it may be bruited in the East. Third, most people are by this time pretty thoroughly wearied with the whole court question, and it will take another important adverse decision of the judges to shake them out of their boredom. Fourth, voters respond most to the hard accomplished facts of economic improvement and local public works under federal auspices. Finally, despite the outcry about government expenditures and high taxes, millions of people still feel that they must continue to depend on federal aid. We agree with Robert S. Allen's statement, elsewhere in this issue, that the President's position on federal expenditures presents a contradiction, and we trust that his Western trip will make him change his mind about drastic curtailing of relief and public-works money. One curious fact is worth noting about the entire trip—the surprise that many newspapers express over the President's failure to push reprisals against Senators Wheeler, O'Mahoney, and the others. This failure is not due to his fear over the Black matter but, as was pointed out in *The Nation* a month ago, to Mr. Roosevelt's determination not to repeat Woodrow Wilson's mistake of making the Congressional elections a personal issue. The President's decision to invade the territory of the hostile Senators is now seen to have been thoroughly justified; it shows the opposition that even in those states they must reckon with the President's undiminished popularity.

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JAPANESE TROOPS IN NORTH CHINA LAST week captured both Tsangchow and Paotingfu, where Chinese concentrations had remained since the beginning of hostilities. While neither city was of major importance, their loss opens the way to the fertile Yellow River valley, which is the immediate objective of the Japanese advance. It also brings the Japanese near to Shihchiachuang, key to the rich province of Shansi. Despite the crushing defeat inflicted upon them, the Chi-

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nese showed exceptional skill in their retreat. Reports from Japanese sources admit that large Chinese armies escaped southward virtually intact, leaving the Japanese with the problem of ever-lengthening lines of communication. A further complication for the Japanese in this area is the continued presence of strong guerrilla forces in the Western Hills, not more than twenty miles southwest of Peiping. On the all-important Shanghai front the deadlock continues, although there are rumors that the Japanese are about to launch another "big push." Apparently angered by their inability to make greater progress, the Japanese resorted to wholesale bombings of the civilian population of the great southern cities—Nanking, Canton, Hankow, Wuchang, and Nanchang—with appalling consequences. Two thousand civilians were killed in Canton, and hundreds in each of the other cities.

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FURTHER ACTION BY THE FEDERAL RESERVE Board to ease its money-market restrictions has so far failed to stem the precipitous decline of the stock market. Financial observers remain as bewildered as ever about the cause of the sudden collapse of security prices. Apart from a small decline in steel operations and a somewhat slow seasonal development in the automobile industry, business reports remain generally favorable. Railway-car loadings, usually an accurate index, were higher in the past week than in any previous week since November, 1930. Commodity prices have, on the whole, remained firm despite excellent crops. The farm purchasing power is estimated to be within 1 per cent of the 1929 level. Bank clearances are running some 15 per cent ahead of last year. But stock prices are not determined primarily by objective conditions. They represent an evaluation of future profits. Here there are at least some reasons for caution. Prices have in many instances risen more rapidly than purchasing power, and it is probable that certain of these advances, as in the automobile and steel industries, will hold down consumption. As a result of the outcry of the conservatives, government expenditures for relief and public works have been cut to the bone. The social-security taxes are beginning to reduce purchasing power; the effects of the bonus have completely worn off. But with all these factors taken into consideration, there still appears to be no reason, apart from a profound case of Wall Street jitters, why prices should have fallen to the extent they have.

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WALL STREET'S LIP-APPROVAL OF THE NEW chairman of the SEC, William O. Douglas, should not be taken too trustingly. Neither Charles R. Gay, head of the Stock Exchange, nor Fred Moffatt, head of the Curb Exchange, welcomes Mr. Douglas's selection. It is no secret that powerful broker and banker interests sought to put every obstacle in the way of his selection, and their belated protestations of approval merely indicate a desire to propitiate the power of the commission. The selection of Mr. Douglas as chairman by the other members of the commission is, to our mind, one of the best pieces of news that has come out of Washington during this discouraging year. It has undoubtedly the indorsement of President Roosevelt and of the retiring chairman, Dean Landis of the Harvard Law School. The commission has thus far been in the stage of laying the groundwork, making exploratory surveys of the territory, feeling out the Wall Street climate. It may go on to become an effective "investors' advocate," controlling the issue of and trading in securities, corporate reorganizations, holding-company structure, and operations on the Exchange. Or it may go the path that the Tariff Commission and the Federal Trade Commission went in the twenties, when they fell into the hands of the very people they were meant to regulate. We welcome Mr. Douglas's chairmanship because his whole record on the commission thus far indicates that he has the intelligence and the vigor, if anyone has, to give effectiveness to the work of the SEC.

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THE MODERN FORM OF HIGHWAY ROBBERY known as fascist foreign policy has reached such proportions that the Lost and Found Department at Geneva now merely records major thefts, such as the seizure of Ethiopia or the burglary of the Balearics; while the recent Nyon conference, like the Non-Intervention Committee, was content merely to introduce some measure of regulation into the international piracy that has reared its ugly periscope in the Mediterranean. . . . The large-scale operations of Mussolini and Hitler have inevitably given rise to an outbreak of minor cases of assault and battery, petty larceny, kidnapping, and homicide which are becoming a burden at least to the French police and detective agencies. At Brest the other day a group of General Franco's agents tried, as the stately New York *Times* headline had it, to "hijack" a Spanish government submarine which was laid up in that port for repairs. One man was killed in the affair. Count Julian Troncozo y Sagrado, insurgent chief of the northern frontier of Spain, who happened to be in France at the time, has been arrested and jailed in Bayonne as the instigator of the plot. In retaliation the French consul at Malaga has been "stolen" by the insurgents and is being held, we hope not for repairs. The submarine robbery was foiled, but there is an unfounded rumor that the British fleet has been ordered to stick together lest one of its crack ships, venturing out alone, should attract the covetous eye of an Italian, German, insurgent, or Japanese admiral. . . . In French Tunis a group of Italian sailors who may have been part of a "punitive expedition" of fascists from Italian Libya, invaded the office of an Italian anti-fascist newspaper editor. He did not survive the encounter; the headquarters of the Italian League for the Rights of Man was sacked at about the same time. . . . But the most mysterious international mystery has occurred in Paris, where two white Russian generals have been borrowed, stolen, or "disposed of." The mystery is intensified of course by the Russian names of those involved as well as by the fact that one of them is a "veiled Russian singer." This woman, whose name is Nadine

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Plevitskaia, has been arrested on suspicion of complicity in a plot in which her husband was a vanishee; and a Soviet freighter which sailed from Havre for Leningrad with two alleged mysterious passengers is also suspected. The freighter's name is Marya Ulyanova. We give up.

*

THE LA FOLLETTE SENATE COMMITTEE ON civil liberties last year laid bare the inner workings of labor espionage. According to current reports it has set for itself this year the task of investigating vigilante activities. The inquiry will have a wide geographical sweep, and the committee's experts will play the tank towns as well as the big industrial centers. It is planning hearings in the Imperial Valley, in Kansas City, in Arkansas, and in Tampa, Florida, where the Klan is on the march again. The inquiry into labor espionage had excellent results in educating the public; the present project is even more important. Benjamin Stolberg in his articles in our issues of August 14 and 21 established the fact that the employers have fully discovered the uses of fascism and are ready to finance it. The La Follette committee is in an excellent position to demonstrate and define for the public, in terms of specific local events and persons, the general characteristics of vigilantism, the sources of its support, and its significance as a dress rehearsal of fascism. Vigilantism thrives by exploiting the decent motives of the ignorant or unthinking average citizen. The La Follette committee can teach him that when he aids or condones the violation of the civil rights of any individual or group he is thereby laying the basis for his own repression at some later time.

*

THE DEATH OF EDWARD A. FILENE ROBS THE United States of one of its most vigorous personalities. Scorning the easy living and thinking of the conventional rich man, he devoted his money and his untiring energy to economic reform. Higher wages and lower prices, achieved through increasingly mechanized mass-production, was his prescription for an ailing capitalism. Only through the "companionate prosperity" of the masses, he maintained, could the owners of American industry make secure their own prosperity. It was Mr. Roosevelt's effort to increase the purchasing power of the masses that made Mr. Filene an ardent New Dealer —one of the few recruits from the ranks of business "leaders." The same concern for the economic welfare of the little man led Mr. Filene to give an initial impetus to the credit-union movement that now serves more than a million people in thirty-five states with small loans at low rates; to launch, in his seventy-fourth year, the Consumers' Distribution Corporation designed to build a chain of cooperative department stores across the country; and to endow the Twentieth Century Fund, a foundation dedicated to the unusual theory that the chief aim of philanthropy should be to help remove the necessity for giving.

Don't Buy Silk!

THE increasing terror of the Japanese invasion of China, with its wanton bombardment of refugees and of the slum quarters of China's great sprawling cities, has shocked the conscience of a world which is accustomed to brutality and bloodshed. Great Britain, France, the United States, and the Soviet Union have entered vigorous protests against the mass murder of civilian populations. But aside from a condemnatory resolution adopted by its advisory committee, no step has been taken by the League or by the powers acting individually to restrain Japanese aggression. Governments seem to find themselves immobilized by the powerful popular sentiment against any action which might involve their countries in war. If Japan is to be checked and other potential aggressors headed off, it will have to be through a new technique—a technique that is nonviolent and is not dependent on governmental action. A method must be found whereby the masses who are called upon to bear the brunt of war can take action to prevent the war madness which has engulfed Japan from spreading through the world.

The one effective means of protest against war available to the American people today is a consumers' boycott of Japanese goods. An unofficial boycott is not open to any of the objections which have been leveled against international sanctions or governmental embargos. The American government cannot be charged with unneutral conduct merely because citizens choose to buy American-made rather than Japanese goods, or because they refuse to give economic assistance to the Japanese war machine. No military or naval force is required to back up a refusal to purchase Japanese products. Nor can it be said that a boycott would lead to the starvation of Japanese noncombatants. It happens that Japan, with Korea and Formosa, is virtually self-sufficient in foodstuffs, although for secondary war materials, such as scrap-iron, oil, and cotton, it depends very largely on imports.

Because of this, Japan is peculiarly vulnerable to a boycott. As Freda Utley points out in an article on another page of this issue, the Japanese economy is highly unstable. In the first six months of 1937, before the present difficulties even started in China, Japan had an unfavorable trade balance of 640 million yen. Japan is dependent on outside sources for practically all the raw materials necessary to maintain its industry. It must keep up its present export trade if it is to purchase the necessities for waging its war in China.

The organization of a boycott against Japanese goods is a complicated and difficult task. It is not only necessary to persuade consumers that they can make an effective protest against militarism by refusing to support the Japanese war machine, but it is necessary to tell them what products they can substitute for Japanese articles or induce them to do without certain articles to which they are accustomed. This difficulty is apparent particularly in the case of silk. To be effective, a boycott must

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be directed primarily against silk. Sericulture is the foundation stone of Japan's economy. Silk is the one important export commodity entirely Japanese-created. Other textiles and cheap manufactured articles are merely processed in Japan, the raw materials coming from abroad. Moreover, despite the decline in recent years, silk makes up 55 per cent of Japan's exports to the United States, and the United States takes some 85 per cent of Japan's exported silk. And—even more important from the standpoint of an effective boycott—no less than 97 per cent of the silk used in this country in recent years has come from Japan. Thus the purchase of any given silk dress, if really silk, or pair of silk stockings, is a direct aid to the Japanese in their invasion of China.

A boycott against silk dresses should not present any insurmountable difficulties, since excellent rayon dresses may be obtained in any style and at any price. Women buyers need only be educated to demand American-made rayon, and if the demand is effective enough they can compel local manufacturers to mark their goods "Contains no silk." In the case of silk stockings the problem is admittedly difficult and yet vitally important, since the bulk of Japanese silk is used in the stocking industry. While stockings made of the coarse grades of rayon wear better, on the average, than cheap silk stockings, they are by no means as satisfactory in style or appearance. On the other hand, a stocking made from the better grades of artificial silk will not wear as well as genuine silk. As substitutes, however, both plain lisle and lisle-net stockings may be purchased. Though moderately expensive, these are satisfactory in both appearance and wearing qualities, and they have the advantage of being readily distinguishable from silk.

While no other Japanese export even approaches silk in value, there are a great many articles which, in the aggregate, are of considerable importance. The five-and-ten-cent stores of the country are filled with Japanese products, mostly of inferior quality. These include chinaware, electric-light bulbs, clothing accessories, decorated trays, household gadgets, tuna fish, crab meat, rag rugs, toys, Christmas-tree ornaments, and many other petty articles. A boycott directed against these should be relatively simple, since most of the articles are clearly stamped "Made in Japan," and since a corresponding American-made article, while more expensive, is usually of considerably better quality. Japanese electric-light bulbs, for example, cost five cents less than the American product but use so much more electricity that they would be expensive if a fifty-cent piece were wrapped with each bulb.

We believe that there are large numbers of Americans who are willing to make whatever sacrifice is involved in changing their buying habits until the Japanese are forced out of China. The task is one of organization; and since it is primarily one of organizing women, we commend it to the women's peace organizations, trade unions, and all other groups desirous of preventing another world war. "Don't Buy Silk" is the slogan which will make possible, if anything will, the restoration of international law and security in the Far East.

The Dictators Meet

WHILE the full import of Mussolini's visit to Hitler may not be known for some time, it cannot be denied that it was a masterpiece of showmanship. The League had just met and was feebly engaged in trying to find a solution to the Spanish and Chinese appeals which would not offend the aggressors. The Nyon "piracy" agreement had been made over in part to suit the pirates. Japan was unleashing death upon defenseless Chinese civilians. With large sections of the world in shambles, the two great dictators—upon whose word the outbreak of the next war hangs—met amid unparalleled display to determine the next step in their campaign of aggression.

Beneath the pomp and ceremony, however, Hitler and Mussolini were undoubtedly oppressed by the fact that events are not going too well for dictators. Despite the partial victory at Nyon, the anti-piracy patrol has been established, and for the first time in weeks supplies are pouring into Loyalist Spain. Madrid reports food shipments which eliminate for the time being any danger of serious shortage. Aided by new supplies, the government has launched two of the most successful offensives that it has undertaken since the beginning of the war. In the south the Loyalists have captured Penarroya, an important rail junction, and swept on almost ten miles to the outskirts of Granja. In the extreme east government troops have advanced along the Pyrenees to Jaca. They are also reported to have cut the railway between Saragossa and Huesca. While the rebel advance against Gijon has continued in the north, the Asturians are putting up a much better fight than anyone believed possible a few weeks ago.

Once again Mussolini and Hitler must decide whether to withdraw from Spain or to send heavy reinforcements in the hope of breaking the long deadlock. On this the reports are conflicting. In the middle of last week the British government declared that it had been assured that Italy would send no more "volunteers" to Spain. Later, however, a responsible Italian official asserted that Italian troops would continue to fight for Franco "until he wins." Which course is taken will depend largely on the accuracy of the sensational stories which have been coming through recently of disaffection in Mussolini's empire. While the report of a wholesale massacre of Italians at Makale, printed in the New York *Herald Tribune,* was promptly denied, such denials can never be taken at their face value. Meanwhile, even more significant stories have come from Sicily. The most recent issue of the *Week* (London) credits foreign military observers with the statement that the recent Italian maneuvers were held in Sicily primarily for the purpose of forestalling severe civilian disturbances. Prior to the dispatch of troops the area was described as being in "a state of more or less open and sporadic civil war."

In ordinary states the existence of domestic unrest would bring about a conciliatory shift in foreign policy.

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In fascist states, however, this is not necessarily the case. Both Hitler and Mussolini have consistently acted on the assumption that the best way to quell internal discontent is to create a first-rate international issue. Thus the next few weeks may be decisive ones in European history.

The Education of Hugo Black

BY THE time this is read, Justice Black will have returned to the United States, faced with a choice of talking or refusing to talk, of resigning or sticking to his guns. We want him to talk, but not to resign.

The Nation's position on the Black imbroglio can be briefly summarized. We are against the Klan, as we have always been, and against everything that the Klan stands for. If we thought that Justice Black were now a Klansman, in fact, spirit, deed, or idea, we should oppose him bitterly and without compromise. But we see nothing about him—his personality, his actions, his speeches, his friends and enemies, his Senate record—that carries even a whiff of the Klan smell. We see instead a brilliant, militant, uncompromising liberal, who has brought his fine abilities to the service of the underprivileged and the oppressed—one of a small group in Congress that has put teeth into liberalism. And seeing this, we examine the charges contained in the Paul Block series "exposing" Black, we consider the sources from which these charges come and the motives that impel them, and in the absence of any other evidence we refuse to be swerved from our belief in the integrity of Black's liberalism.

What did the Paul Block articles say? They said that Justice Black was a member of the Klan in Alabama for two years, from 1923 to 1925, before he ran for the Senate; that he resigned in 1925; that he appeared at another Klan meeting in 1926 and received a "grand passport" of honorary membership in the Klan, which he has never since formally turned back; that in his speech at this meeting he thanked the Klan for its support; and that others present at this meeting made violent speeches in affirmation of the Klan's anti-Negro, anti-Catholic, anti-Jewish principles.

We want to know from Justice Black how many of these charges are true. Pending his long-delayed statement, we will assume their truth. What follows? We stated, in our first editorial approving Black's nomination to the Supreme Court, that he had accepted Klan support in his senatorial campaign. This seemed small when weighed in the balance against Black's record in the Senate, and his stand against everything reactionary in American life. The new charges add three specific items—the actual Klan membership for two years, the actual speech acknowledging Klan support, and the acceptance of the "passport." Of these the last is the one that troubles liberals most. If the "passport" has any meaning, it would make Justice Black still a Klan member. But one has only to read its bombastic phrases to see that it is one of those meaningless baubles that every politician possesses, of one kind or another. None of the new items are palatable to us, but they do not go substantially beyond the original fact of Black's acceptance of Klan support. They do increase the conviction we have previously expressed that Black at the time of his election to the Senate was a political opportunist.

But what of the Black of 1937? It is that Black who is now on the court, and whose right to be on the court is now being contested. We don't like political opportunists, but we insist on the necessity for distinguishing between opportunism and all the connotations of bigotry and reaction that go with the symbol of the Klansman.

Hugo Black is no Klansman. Everything that he has stood for in his eleven years in the Senate runs counter to what the Klan has stood for. The Klan itself hates him bitterly now, as the Alabama employers hate him, and it has evidently lent its records with great willingness to the "investigators." Black has supported human rights in their crucial aspect in the America of today—the right to have a job and get decent wages and not work excessive hours; he has fought for adequate relief for the unemployed from the ravages of the depression; he has fought to give Negroes in the South the same economic status as whites, and to save them from discrimination in the provisions of the wage-hour bill; he has fought for the consumer of public-utility services; he has fought for the liberation of the common man from the oppressive weight of the giant corporation lobbies, which have hitherto kept him from thinking freely or freely exercising his political privileges. Black has throughout his Senate career been more than the politico who pays lip-service to the tenets of liberalism. He has been a passionately sincere humanist, guided throughout by his understanding of the fundamental truth of the new militant liberalism—that the basic approach to human rights lies in securing for the individual that economic freedom on which alone the dignity of the individual can be based.

Hugo Black was not born to this knowledge. He was no New England Brahman, no Western Populist, no New York intellectual. He did not have in his blood and at his command the traditions of intellectual enlightenment that Justice Holmes, Senator La Follette, Justice Cardozo inherited. For what he is, he has had to sweat and fight. He has come up from the ignorance and bigotry of the Southern masses. He has fought his way from a rudimentary schooling and a small-town law practice into national prominence. He has had no one like Emerson near him to discuss Plato with, as Holmes did, no expensive Harvard training as Brandeis did. He has had to grope his way unaided through books, see through their platitudes, get at their truths. On his visit in London the man he sought out was Harold Laski, the place he sought out was Toynbee Hall, the books he looked for in the bookstalls were some volumes of Grote's "History of Aristotle" which were missing

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from his collection, and Thucydides's "History of the Greek Wars." Between the philosophical radical of today and Black's origins in the little town of Ashland, Alabama, stretches an enormous span. The story of how that span was built is the story of the education of Hugo Black. And in that education the Klan incident was an episode, blunderingly entered upon and now being bitterly paid for. But the results of that education hearten us with a renewed belief in the possibilities of American life.

The Nation's support of Justice Black, like the support of other progressive organs of opinion, has been vigorously attacked by writers in the New York *Times* and *Herald Tribune*. These writers, who have fought reaction with a fervor directly proportionate to its distance from our shores, now set themselves up as the high priests of liberalism in America and the keepers of its sacred fires. Their views on Justice Black undoubtedly reflect as well as form the opinions of a strong minority of liberals, especially since so many of them still cling to the notion of Supreme Court judges as men set apart from other mortals. This other-worldly view of the judges is part of a false symbolism of the court that exercises such a hold over us still, even after the proof that has piled up in the past two years that judges are all too human. Not sharing this view of the court, we plead for making the same appraisal of an appointment to it as one would make of a selection for any other high and responsible office.

We are accused of betraying liberalism by the doctrine that the end justifies any means. We hold no such doctrine. We hold that if democratic government is to survive it must learn not to fall into the traps set by powerful oligarchical minorities, and that the demand for the resignation of Justice Black is such a trap. Parallels are continually drawn with the experience of Germany and Italy. But we insist that the crucial lessons to be learned from the experience of both countries is that the absolutes of ideological liberalism are not enough, and that when democracies allow the machinery of government to be deadlocked and fail to maintain their control over the anarchic forces of big business, they give way to dictatorships. Justice Black as an individual is of minor importance, but Justice Black as an active part of a program of effective democracy is a symbol of major moment.

There is another line of objection that has a measure of cogency, although we find it indecisive. It comes from those who feel that the liberal defense of Justice Black will have indirect consequences that may in the end prove costly. It is of course conceivable that Klan organizers will feel emboldened to go about claiming the sanction of liberal approval and Supreme Court membership, but it is too far-fetched a contingency to sway our judgment. Like other liberals we shall continue to attack the Klan and every other manifestation of vigilantism and reaction wherever they appear. But the way to attack these evils is to continue the fight against the conditions that breed them, not assail a man who in defiance of his own past has made himself a leader in that fight.

Legionism

TIMES SQUARE has recovered from the impact of an American Legion convention, and several hundred thousand legionnaires and their wives have gone back to a thousand American towns to pursue business as usual—until another riotous holiday rolls round. We do not grudge the legionnaires their fun. Yet it does not seem too much to ask that the representatives of 1,000,000 men who were soldiers in the world's most futile war twenty years ago should now, in their maturity, make a genuine if small contribution to the preservation of democracy and peace in the form of intelligent declarations of policy. But the air of democracy was not enriched by the utterances of American Legion dignitaries; and peace was discussed only in terms of militarism and the next war. The whole affair was a dispiriting exhibition of hypocrisy and confusion by day—while by night elephantine schoolboy pranks paralyzed the orderly processes of the country's largest city with ominous completeness.

The Legion convention made a great show of non-partisanship on controversial issues. If it had been truly non-partisan it would have denounced the extra-legal vigilante movements in which legionnaires have played a large part in the past year. Instead, it passed resolutions defending property rights and the sanctity of contracts but neglected to mention freedom of speech, press, peaceable assembly, or picketing; and its new commander, Daniel J. Doherty, a "desk admiral" from Boston, took occasion to say that while every legionnaire must decide for himself which side to take in a given situation, "the American Legion and each individual legionnaire must preserve law and order when called upon by the legal authorities." Apparently, then, it remains only for the deputy sheriff or the mayor of a company town to speak —as they did in Monroe, Michigan, and Johnstown, Pennsylvania—and the men of the Legion will be found once more on the side of the angels and Tom Girdler.

Before the convention opened, there was much talk of peace as the most pressing issue to be considered. But the program presented to the delegates, those that showed up on the morning after the night before in Times Square, was much the same as in former years. It called for the conscription of capital as well as men in the next war, demanded a navy second to none, recommended increases in the standing army and reserve corps, and demanded pensions for widows and orphans of veterans.

Aside from such matters as electing a new national commander, the Legion leadership devoted most of its energy to a typical "know-nothing" attack on what it calls "isms"—fascism, communism, and nazism—while fostering in the ranks of the organization an attitude of intolerance which is best described as legionism. The legionnaires this year did not bring up the question of pensions. But there will be other conventions—and it is a commonplace of our history that one good handout, like one good war, always deserves another.

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The Legion Comes to Town—by John Groth

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Roosevelt Consults the Country

BY ROBERT S. ALLEN

Pocatello, Idaho, September 26
Aboard President Roosevelt's Train

THIS has been a hard trip for all but a handful of the twenty-odd correspondents accompanying the President. Reactionary news butchers working for reactionary papers, most of them were sent for the express purpose of producing unfavorable dispatches. Particularly were they under orders to cook up stories reporting a great tidal wave of popular outrage over the Black-Klan exposé. They have found it tough going.

From Chicago west there is no sign of excitement over the Black matter. The feeling seems to be general that the Alabaman was appointed because of his long and outstanding liberal record in the Senate and that his one-time membership in the Klan, while unfortunate, does not establish his present unfitness for the bench. The most conclusive evidence of this state of public opinion is the calm attitude of local leaders, whose business it is to keep an ear close to the ground. With few exceptions, from Mayor Kelly of Chicago to Senator Schwellenbach of Washington they declare there is no strong feeling against Black. Senator O'Mahoney of Wyoming, a Catholic and a leading foe of the President's court bill, summed up the general point of view: "People are discounting Black's membership in the Klan years ago. They feel he has grown up and that he will make as courageous and liberal a judge as he was for twelve years a Senator."

As striking as this attitude concerning Black is the undiminished popularity and strength of the President throughout the West. In fact, the two go hand in hand. Repeatedly this correspondent has heard the remark, "Well, Roosevelt appointed him, and he must be all right." The President's continued hold on the public is extraordinary. It is safe to assert that if a vote were taken this year he would sweep the country as overwhelmingly as he did a year ago. Everywhere along his route, whether early in the morning, in the afternoon, or late at night, enthusiastic crowds are on hand to acclaim him. Even more significant is the way state and local officials and Senators and Congressmen hover about him. Politicos don't do that unless they know it pays. The most dramatic illustration of this was Senator O'Mahoney's muscling in on the President's party during the tour through Wyoming. O'Mahoney never would have put on so public an exhibition of crow-eating if he had not felt he had to.

At the same time there is no excessive interest in the court-reform fight. The feeling seems to be that while Roosevelt did not get the bill he wanted, he nevertheless forced the Supreme Court to reverse itself and that a man of his choice now holds a place on the bench. Unquestionably a reactionary decision by the Supreme Court or a new judiciary bill by the President would rekindle the flames of controversy, but at present interest is at a low ebb. Nor is there active sentiment for a special session of Congress. If Roosevelt calls one, it will be accepted as something he considers necessary. But there is no demand for it. On the other hand, there is strong demand for a new AAA. This is a reversal of attitude. A few months ago the farmers generally were indifferent to such legislation. But the break in commodity prices has scared them. They fear a repetition of 1930-32 and want another crop-surplus control program. They don't care whether it is enacted at a special or regular session, but they want it in operation by next spring.

The significance of one phase of the President's speeches during the trip has largely been muffed by the press accompanying him. Little stress has been placed on his repeated and deftly worded statements that the end is in sight for large public-works and relief expenditures. In throwing out this hint the President has found himself at variance with both local authorities and public sentiment. The West wants more, not fewer, federal projects, and state and city officials have warned Roosevelt that continued curtailment of relief rolls will result in extensive and bitter suffering this winter. To this popular opinion and official counsel he has replied in a curious way. In one breath he has boasted of the thousands of permanent developments constructed under his Administration and the great benefits localities will derive from them, and in the next he has declared the time has come to put an end to such commendable works. His speech at Casper, Wyoming, was an illustration of this paradoxical position.

"I am glad this great project of yours, the Casper-Alcova dam, is being constructed," he said. "It is just one example of what the government has been doing these last four years. We have spent money in every part of the country putting people to work. At the same time we have benefited thousands of communities with developments of permanent value. However, from now on we are not going to spend nearly so fast as we did the first four years. There isn't anything like the unemployment today that existed when I first came into office. That, of course, is helping me to balance the budget and we are doing that steadily."

Cutting down relief and public-works expenditures undoubtedly will help balance the budget. It will also win the President plaudits from the reactionary press, Wall Street, and business men. But it will not solve unemployment or the problems of states and cities on whom the care of the huge army of jobless is steadily being thrust—as Mr. Roosevelt is destined to learn in the not distant future.

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Japan Fears a Boycott

BY FREDA UTLEY

IN SEVERAL quarters a boycott is being suggested as a technique to check Japanese aggression in China. The effectiveness of such a boycott is readily apparent, for Japan is economically even more vulnerable than Italy. Moreover, while Italy entered upon its conquest of Ethiopia after more than a decade of peace, Japan is attempting to conquer China with its reserves already exhausted by the effort of holding down the 30,000,000 people of Manchuria and fortifying that puppet state against the U. S. S. R. And, finally, the conquest of a united China determined on resistance at whatever cost is a far stiffer proposition than the conquest of Ethiopia.

In the first six months of 1937 Japan had an adverse trade balance larger than the total for the earthquake year of 1924 and almost as large as the total adverse balance for 1936. Even before the war began, exports were covering only two-thirds of imports. Japan lacks the foreign investments necessary to cover its trade deficit and has accordingly been forced to export its scanty gold reserves.

Japan's great import excess in 1936 and 1937 is due not only to the large amount of metals and machinery necessary for its armament program, but also to the dwindling of the advantage it has derived since 1932 from extremely low labor costs in a period of cheap raw materials. As the prices of cotton and wool rose on the world market, the ratio of raw-material cost to the total cost of production rose along with it, while that of labor cost fell. Consequently Japan's export of textiles started to decline last year in quantity as well as in value, and has continued to decline ever since. Japan is finding it increasingly difficult to undercut its competitors.

The British Empire takes 28 per cent of Japanese exports and supplies 31 per cent of its imports. The United States (without the Philippines) takes 22 per cent and supplies 32 per cent. Thus the British Empire and the United States combined take half of Japan's exports and supply 63 per cent of its needs. Moreover, the United States takes 85 per cent of Japan's raw-silk export, which is the only Japanese export not dependent on imported supplies of raw materials. Japan's whole social structure, in fact, is dependent on the American silk market.

Japan is vitally dependent on imports of oil from the United States and the Dutch East Indies, and of iron and scrap from India, Malaya, and Australia. Even with imported ore the output of pig iron in the Japanese Empire, including Manchuria, at its peak figure in 1936 was only 2.9 million tons as against Britain's 8 million and Germany's 15 million. Japan's steel production is little more than double Luxemburg's; together with that of Manchuria its output in 1936 came to only 5½ million tons as against Britain's 11.8 million and Germany's 19 million. Its coal consumption is only a fifth of Britain's. Japan's heavy industry is not developed proportionately to its light industry. Japan cannot even make its own automobiles and is dependent on the West for many kinds of machinery.

A vital weakness for Japan in war is its primitive system of land cultivation. The productivity per acre is high, but the productivity per man is excessively low since not even animal power is used in cultivation and machinery is almost unknown. The labor of one peasant family produces only enough rice to feed itself and two other families even at the low average rate of consumption in peace time. Hence the transfer of large numbers of men to the army, and of women to the munition factories, is bound to cause a steep fall in production at the very time when tens of thousands of soldiers have to be provided with a more substantial diet than they existed on as peasants.

Japan has never fought a real war without financial assistance from the West. Today its financial position is worse than it has ever been, and at the end of last year it had already started down the slippery slope of inflation. Wholesale prices last April were nearly double what they had been in December, 1931, before the gold standard was abandoned, although money wages have declined. Metals had risen 76 per cent since 1936, textiles and fuel 25 per cent, and retail prices 30 per cent. The hardship of this caused the number of strikes in the first four months of this year to reach the highest figure on record. The difference in the extent to which wholesale and retail prices have risen is a measure of the difficulties of the small shopkeepers and artisans.

The rise in the cost of living, which was proceeding at an accelerated pace even before the war began, is mainly due to Japan's long series of unbalanced budgets. Ever since the Manchurian "affair" the deficit covered by loan issues has been mounting, and according to official estimates for the current year, national expenditure was expected to reach 2,872 million yen as against an ordinary revenue of little more than 1,500 million. Fresh loans were to provide 965 million, and taxation 1,313 million. The new appropriations for the war on China bring the total expenditure up to nearly 5,500 million. The estimated revenue from taxation, state monopolies, and the like now covers less than a third of expenditure. Moreover, the war expenditures are estimated for a war of short duration.

The significance of the 5½-billion-yen state expenditure can be appreciated if one notes that the estimated national income (according to the Mitsubishi Economic Research Bureau) was only 13 billion in 1936, and that the national debt was already 11 billion at the end

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of last year. The per capita income in Japan is less than 200 yen a year (about $56.50 in American money), of which the state now claims 40 per cent.

Socially Japan is as unstable as it is economically. Nearly half the population is on the land, and the large majority of the peasantry pay half or more of the rice harvest as rent in kind to a million parasitic landowners, who contribute neither seed, nor fertilizer, nor capital. Those peasants who in theory own their own land are equally burdened by the high rates of interest they have to pay to usurers; practically none of them are free from debt. The consequence of the survival of such feudal social and economic relationships is an extremely narrow home market and a desperately poor peasantry, unable to accumulate capital even when prices rise, and therefore unable to modernize its methods of cultivation. This in turn has led to a lopsided industrial development; only the export industries, such as textiles, and the armament industries, relying on state orders, are conducted on a large scale with up-to-date technique. Below them are an enormous number of tiny enterprises in which a master and a few apprentices and "journeymen" produce by hand or with a minimum of mechanical power.

The enormous lower middle class of petty landowners, usurers, small industrialists, traders, artisans, and craftsmen is extremely poor and full of hatred for the monopolists of trade and industry who control raw materials, credit, and foreign trade. Interest rates are so high and the home market is so narrow that there is no possibility of the small man's expanding his business and becoming a prosperous capitalist. There is no substantial investing middle class, capital being centralized to an extraordinary degree in the hands of the giant family business houses —the Mitsui, Mitsubishi, Sumitomo, Yasuda, and others. Although all incomes above 1,200 yen ($600 at par) a year are taxable, there were only 569,046 income taxpayers in 1931, and only 20,524 who reported incomes of $5,000 or more. The average was about $800. Yet there were twenty men drawing between $300,000 and $1,500,000. Only 730,000 tradesmen paid the business-profits tax, which is levied on all businesses making a net profit of $200 or more a year.

Such centralization of capital, although it makes the mobilization of national income for war easier than in countries with a large middle class, renders Japan's social system peculiarly unstable in a crisis. The bitter hatred of the peasant for the landowner and the usurer—who is in fact the agent of the banks—and of the small trader and industrialist for the plutocrats constitutes a veritable volcano, the eruption of which Japan's ruling classes seek to prevent by wars and chauvinist propaganda.

These social discontents have been canalized into support of aggression since 1931, and revolt has been staved off by false hopes of prosperity for all through easy conquest. But what will happen when conquest is no longer easy, and the strain of a long war becomes intolerable to a people which has been drawing its belt tighter and tighter? Manchuria has provided nothing but additional burdens for the mass of the people. Nor would the annexation of North China, which the Japanese expected to accomplish without a real war, have given any relief to the peasants or the lower middle classes. A poisoned man cannot be cured by stuffing him with food, and Japan's social structure is too diseased for new colonies to cure its ills. Manchuria has plenty of empty land awaiting colonization, but only a few hundred Japanese peasants have gone there. The capital to finance emigration is not forthcoming and will never be available as long as Japan is ruled by plutocrats and a military, landowning class.

Of course China too has its agrarian problem, and there are elements in that country which fear agrarian revolution more than they do a Japanese conquest. The Chinese bankers might be inclined to seize any chance of peace before they lose their wealth, even if this meant surrender of the national interest. The danger is that Britain, concerned only with saving its investments in China before Japan has ruined the country, and nervous about the effect on Japan of a long war, will bring pressure to bear on the Chinese government to surrender although its armies remain undefeated. It is certain, however, that the overwhelming majority of the Chinese people are determined to fight to the bitter end. The Chinese armies are showing extraordinary courage and tenacity at Shanghai, and a boycott of Japanese goods by the United States and Great Britain would almost certainly tip the scales in favor of China. Britain under its present government will never on its own initiative bring economic pressure to bear on Japan. It desires to see the ruling class of Japan survive, and it expects to secure its investments by bargaining with the Japanese and by bringing pressure on China to cede the five northern provinces to Japan. Should the United States decide to boycott Japanese goods, however, while at the same time invoking the Neutrality Act to prevent sales to Japan on credit, the British government would be forced to take action along the same lines. Such action would receive overwhelming support in Britain not only in Liberal and Labor circles but even in certain sections of the Conservative Party.

If the United States is not interested in saving China for moral or ideological reasons, it may be influenced by the fact that one of the main ambitions of Japan in North China is to develop it into a great cotton-growing area and thus become free of the need to import American cotton. Surely the permanent interests of American cotton growers are worth a few weeks' boycott of Japanese silk. American interests in China, moreover, while not comparable to Britain's in the sphere of investments, are not negligible in the sphere of trade.

Japan was far stronger financially in 1922 than it is now, yet the United States and Britain then were easily able to force it to disgorge its conquests in China. There is no more reason now than there was then to fear that political or economic pressure on Japan would involve the United States or Great Britain in a war. The very hint of Anglo-American cooperation to put economic pressure on Japan would stop the war. The United States was able to bring British policy into line with its own in 1922. Can it not do so in 1937?

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British Labor in Retreat

BY HAROLD J. LASKI

London, September 11

THE Trades Union Congress at Norwich was what is politely termed a "realistic" congress. As such, it has been warmly, and not at all illogically, congratulated by the London *Times*. It has defeated unity within the ranks of labor by an overwhelming majority. It has voted, also overwhelmingly, not to oppose the arms program of the national government. It has declared its faith in the ideal of the League of Nations and called upon that body to help democratic Spain. It has reaffirmed its belief in the forty-hour week, though without any concrete plan of action to obtain it. It has approved the Labor Party's contributory pension scheme (for pensions of one pound weekly for single persons at sixty-five years of age and thirty-five shillings for married couples). It has approved a charter for nurses and decided to appoint an advisory council of scientists to assist it in its work. The trade-union movement, said Mr. Bevin proudly, in his presidential address, has become "an integral part of the state."

There was no mention of socialism in the Congress, except from isolated delegates on the floor. There was no mention of the class war. There was no suggestion that in a boom period of rising prices there ought to be a determined effort by the unions for higher wages and better conditions. There was no answer to a demand for a strong campaign on behalf of Spain. There was stony silence when the vice-president of the South Wales Miners' Federation asked for industrial protest against the means test and for higher benefits for the unemployed. The whole atmosphere of the congress pre-supposed collaboration with capitalism and the government. There were demands, indeed, for social reforms like shorter hours; and Mr. Bevin urged the importance of preparing a public-works program against the day when the inevitable slump follows the end of the armaments boom. It was assumed throughout that nothing was possible on any large scale until the next Labor government comes to power.

The central feature of the congress was of course the decision not to oppose the rearmament program of the government. Labor has now adopted an attitude of which the London *Times* can rightly say that "there is no longer even the appearance of disagreement between the government and the opposition on the need for the rearmament that is in progress." Why is this? Because labor assumes that the present international situation is not the outcome of the inherent contradictions of capitalist imperialism, but of the "secret" policies of Germany, Italy, and Japan in persuading large numbers of their subjects that they are encircled and menaced by hostile combinations of other states. Labor assumes that fascism menaces democracy, which must be armed to meet the menace. It therefore commits itself to supporting the provision of arms. It seems quite unable to realize what is involved in that commitment.

For, clearly, support of the arms program means that there can be no industrial action which will interfere with its completion. That is why the trade-union leaders refuse to take advantage of the present boom. That is why in almost every big union militant members are penalized, unofficial strikes vigorously suppressed, and too zealous strikers, like some in the Transport Workers' Union and the Electrical Trades Union, actually expelled. The leaders, in fact, have assured the government and the employers that they need not expect difficulties from the trade unions in completing the armaments program.

For if, says Sir Walter Citrine, labor were in power, it would need arms against fascism; therefore, keeping in view the day when it will come to power, it must not interfere with their present provision. But labor is at the same time insisting that it is passionately opposed to the foreign policy of the government. It is therefore arming it for the defense of a policy which it has denounced on a thousand platforms as largely responsible for the need to rearm.

Does labor expect that if the present government is driven into war with any or all of the fascist powers it will automatically adopt labor's foreign policy? Or is it gambling on the possibility that war will not come until a Labor government is in power? I confess that I do not know, though I suspect that it is the first view that is in the minds of those leaders who have prevailed. They are ready, that is, to give a support to the government similar to that which they proffered to Mr. Asquith and Sir Edward Grey in 1916. They make, it appears, the similar assumption that a capitalist government which fights fascist capitalism is fighting the battle of labor. Yet in the same breath they are forced to condemn the sympathy of this government for General Franco, and to insist on the necessity of a complete alteration in its non-interventionist policy. I do not wonder that Mr. Attlee and Herbert Morrison are gravely perturbed at the direction the trade unions have given the labor movement. They are leading it straight to a deception as profound as that of 1914.

This explains the overwhelming rejection of unity. For the protagonists of unity have insisted throughout that there is no safe policy for the workers unless it is built upon a recognition of the abyss which separates working-class interests from capitalist interests over the whole field of policy. They say that the only kind of war a capitalist government will wage is one undertaken to

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defend capitalist interests. Once the labor movement fails to recognize this, its policy must follow an inevitable logic. It will begin, as it has begun, by supporting rearmament. It will continue by sacrificing the claims of the workers to the fulfilment of the arms program. And it will end by joining a re-formed National government to wage the war that will eventually come out of the competition in arms.

The view that trade-union leaders have taken has, in fact, caught the labor movement in a trap. All the talk about using the League, ending non-intervention, and so on produces not the slightest effect on the government. It will do nothing in the League for democratic Spain; Sir Samuel Hoare has already told us that the Spanish struggle is a "faction fight" in which the British people have no interest. The trade unions do not appear to understand that what makes their strength respected by the government is a willingness to use that strength. They were respected in 1920 when by militant action they stopped intervention in Russia. They cannot expect respect in 1937 when they appeal to the British government to use the League in behalf of Spain—the same British government which they charge is primarily responsible for sabotaging the League.

All this is a grim prelude to the Labor Party conference at Bournemouth next month. It will not be less reactionary, or I should say "realistic," than the Trades Union Congress. Unity will not be discussed, for the National Executive has already ruled the forty-three resolutions urging it out of order. Support for the arms program will go through; the trade-union majority will assure that. It is even said that the proposal that the local Labor parties elect their own representatives to the executives will be defeated by the trade unions, since if this proposal should pass, it is more than probable that certain left-wing Socialists would be elected to the executives.

I predict that there will emerge at Bournemouth the most right-wing atmosphere the Labor Party has ever known. Every expression of left opinion will be steamrollered by the trade-union leaders. For those leaders do not even respect the decisions of their own rank and file. The Amalgamated Engineering Union was instructed by its annual conference to move that the arms program be withdrawn. At Norwich the executive of that union arbitrarily decided to withdraw its resolution. The miners instructed their delegates to reject the General Council's proposals, but the delegates decided to support it even before the debate on armaments was held. It is no wonder that many visitors and rank-and-file delegates were asking at Norwich what labor leaders will be members of the National government when the final crisis comes.

I do not for a moment doubt the sincerity of either Sir Walter Citrine or Mr. Bevin, the two leaders predominantly concerned in making the new orientation of labor. I say only that in making it they have adopted an attitude incompatible with a Socialist diagnosis, and therefore a Socialist policy, in this critical position. They separate fascism abroad from its capitalist roots—and look to British capitalists to save us from its consequences. And in order to help save us they suppress militancy in the unions, deny the reality of the class struggle, sneer at the conquests of the Soviet Union, and assure the government that, in the one field where it is afraid of the trade unions, it need not fear them. All this at a time when the cost of living is rising, when in the metal industries unprecedented profits are being made, when the government, in addition, is lavishing subsidies on the employers.

Mr. Bevin foresees the coming slump, and he asks this government to take action against it. He knows as well as anyone what this government did in the slump of 1931. He knows that in that crisis wages were ruthlessly cut, standards of life ruthlessly lowered. He knows further that capitalism is well accustomed to climbing out of a slump by an attack on the workers. I do not know what reason he has to suppose that it will be different next time. Does he expect that out of gratitude to him for his attitude now the National government will in a crisis embark upon a great program for housing and health and education? Mr. Bevin is not a simple man, and I find it difficult to believe that he can be so easily deceived. Yet his present policy calls essentially for a collaboration with a government which by its nature prevents the workers from fighting for their legitimate share of the profits being made in this boom period. It is a policy, moreover, which assists in penalizing all who refuse to concur in this lamentable and short-sighted conciliation.

I wish I were certain what Mr. Bevin meant by his remarkable claim that the trade-union movement is "an integral part of the state." There is an undeniable fascist flavor about that utterance. Does Mr. Bevin think that state and community are interchangeable terms? Does he believe that the state is a neutral factor in society which, independently of the ownership of the instruments of production, charges itself with the well-being of all classes? It is difficult to interpret his presidential address except upon that assumption. And the implication follows that Mr. Bevin has become a liberal social reformer whose principles are not really distinguishable from those of Lord Baldwin or Mr. Lloyd George. The pace at which he wishes to move is, no doubt, more rapid. But I do not need to explain to Americans who watch the struggle between the President and big business that a liberal social reformer without a militant labor movement behind him has little chance of victory. He cannot, in the long run, as M. Blum has grimly learned, command the confidence of business interests; and without that confidence he cannot make the system work except on their terms.

This is the cul-de-sac into which the trade-union leaders have taken the labor movement. To get out of it will be a long and grim struggle, not likely to be won without bitter fighting. For when labor consents to join forces with a capitalist government, it forfeits its right to define the purpose of its struggle. It loses its independence; and independence is the condition upon which it remains the master of its own destiny.

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The Romans Would Understand

BY I. F. STONE

WHY do the Nazis engage in a conflict with German Protestantism? They could easily avoid it. It is true that they have set up a totalitarian state, but there is no need to be literal about it. Two-thirds of the Germans are Protestants. Many good bourgeois who approve of all else in Hitlerism resent its interference with their faith. It is significant that Niemöller, leader of the rebellious Confessionals, was no liberal or radical disguising opposition to fascism under the cloak of religious controversy but a reactionary who participated in the brutal attacks on the left after the war and in 1923. What do the Nazis have to gain in this fight? How much may they not lose?

The New York *Times* a few Sundays ago told of the so-called catacomb synod held in Germany. Sixty-eight clergymen and lay members of the Protestant churches gathered for a secret conference in Lippstadt. They went there, the *Times* correspondent reported, "not en masse or even in pairs but singly and at different times. They did not dare to stay in the town hotels." The picture recalls to mind persecutions the church has undergone in the past, the resistance faith has always shown to faggot; and one wonders what obtuseness in the German character has led the Hitler regime to attack these Confessional pastors and to label middle-class suburban clergymen "Marxist" and "Communist." But the conflict transcends national defects and leaps national boundaries. On the same Sunday Hearst's New York *American* had an editorial on Christianity versus Communism splashed over most of page two. There, in much the same terms as those used in the Third Reich, the Protestant Episcopal, the Methodist, the Congregational, and other Christian denominations in this country were accused of harboring Marxism. "Marxism," Mr. Hearst said, "whether Socialist or Communist in its dress, is and has been using the evangelical churches of America as a vehicle to disseminate its propaganda." The chief difference between Mr. Hearst's article and one that might have been penned by Herr Goebbels is that Mr. Hearst pays the Catholic church a compliment for opposing radicalism, while Dr. Goebbels lumps the Catholics with the other "Communists."

It is no accident that we find San Simeon and Berchtesgaden thinking in the same channels. The Hearst outburst came in connection with the fifty-second triennial convention of the Protestant Episcopal Church, to open in Cincinnati on October 6. Bishop William T. Manning of the New York diocese had protested that the programs arranged for the convention by the Church League for Industrial Democracy were "purely propagandist and with more than a tinge of communism." The godly Mr. Hearst had sprung to his aid. The Church League for Industrial Democracy is an Episcopal organization. It has no connection with and in fact antedates the League for Industrial Democracy, a Socialist organization. While the Church L. I. D. is not an official church body, it has a large following among clergy and laity. Six bishops are to preside at the Church L. I. D. meetings during the convention. It happens that, unlike some of the early church fathers, none of the speakers scheduled are Communists. Among them are an alarming number of Reverends—the Reverend Norman Thomas, the Reverend Howard Kester of the Southern Tenant Farmers' League, the Reverend Homer Martin of the United Automobile Workers, and the Reverend A. J. Muste of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. A Communist who appeared in so ecclesiastical an environment would be guilty of heresy.

Charles C. Burlingham of the New York bar, though not a member of the Church L. I. D., has come to its defense with characteristic courage. In a letter to the New York *Times* he expressed confidence that the clergy and laity "of a church so conservative as ours will be glad to learn at first hand the views and objectives of the representative speakers selected on such vital questions as the farm, labor, and the Negro." Mr. Burlingham seems to be mistaken. Bishop Manning does not wish them heard any more than do non-Episcopal reactionaries like Mr. Hearst and Herr Hitler. For this granting of a forum and a sympathetic ear to the underprivileged is, in the peculiar terminology adopted by the Nazis and adapted by Hearst, Marxism.

In this sense it must be confessed that Christianity is inevitably Marxist. A religion based upon the Gospels cannot avoid being a vehicle for ideas which neither fascist nor reactionary can tolerate. For every fifty ministers content to soothe well-fed congregations, there will be at least one who is obsessed with the thought of a child who was born in a stable. He will remember one who preferred fishermen and common folk to Pharisees, who was singularly tactless in his references to the rich, and who was never destined to officiate in a cathedral. This is the type of fellow who listens to workers, share-croppers, and Negroes. He makes trouble.

The Hitlers and the Hearsts are restoring to the church its dignity and its integrity as well. We were in danger of forgetting that until the eighteenth century almost all the great revolutionists cited chapter and verse. The Bible, the work not of lawyers or of theologians but of simple men speaking a simple man's language, has proved troublesome in its time to every established institution, even the church itself. It bred a swarm of heresies—Waldensian, Beghard, Albigensian—in the Catholic church; the contrast between great prelate and humble

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apostle was too glaring; the church did its best to keep the Bible out of the hands of the common people.

From Lollard to Leveler, common men have drawn radical conclusions from their Bibles. The burgher proved from Scripture that he and the barons were equal. The serf proved from Scripture that villeinage was contrary to God's Word. Democracy, humanitarianism, and utopian socialism, all derive from the enthusiasm with which the lower classes, as learning revived and printing spread, turned to Old and New Testament for solace and guidance. The effects were disturbing, and they may be disturbing again. This explains the suspicion of their own faith so often demonstrated by Hearsts and Hitlers, boards of trade and chambers of commerce. Did not the early Christians have all things in common? Did Union Square ever hear stronger denunciation of the rich than that in the fifth chapter of James, beginning, "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl . . ."? The Romans fed Christians to lions long before the "Communist Manifesto." They would have had little difficulty in understanding what Hitler and Hearst mean when they accuse Christian churches of Marxism.

Divided Front in Minnesota

BY HARRY LEVIN

IT IS one year since Floyd Olson died, and the party he led to power in Minnesota is still settling his estate. While the Governor was alive, he was able to reconcile divergent elements within the Farmer-Labor Association by sheer political acumen and personal charm, but he committed them to only the vaguest principles and the loosest organization. It was natural in the confusion after his death that voices from the left should be most articulate. It is quite as natural that there should now be a clamor from the opposite direction. At the present moment, when efforts are being made throughout the West to wean the farmer away from labor, the position of the Minnesota party is crucial. Will it be a nucleus for a third party in 1940 or won't it be able to hold its ground in its own state? The June election in Minneapolis, when Farmer-Laborites fell out and a thinly disguised Republican was returned to the mayor's office, affords a useful laboratory for the examination of these questions.

"Easygoing" is the most charitable term that has been applied to the regime of former Mayor Thomas E. Latimer of Minneapolis. As a labor lawyer he had never commanded the confidence of business, and once in office he proceeded to jeopardize his own support by leading strike-breakers through the picket line in the strike at the Flour City Ornamental Iron Company. His vacillating policy was blamed for the riot in which two people were killed. If there were elements in the community satisfied with his regime, they were not the sort that are publicly acknowledged. But Latimer expected to run again and counted on the indorsement of the city convention of the Farmer-Labor Association when it met in Eagles' Hall in February of this year. He did not count upon an opposition which had been gathering strength and coherence for two years—largely under the influence of the Communist Party and its "united-front" program. After the delegates had been seated, it became obvious that a coalition of C. I. O. representatives, young liberals, and disgruntled old-timers controlled enough votes to upset the two-thirds' majority necessary for indorsing candidates. The meeting adjourned without bringing the mayoralty issue to a test, after having voted to convene again in two weeks.

Three days before the delegates were scheduled to reassemble, the Latimer forces held a caucus and decided to set up a rump convention at the Central Labor Union. They were able to take about half the delegates with them. Group loyalties were crossed in so many ways that it would be hard to divide the rank-and-file representation by a sharp line, but it is easier to distinguish the leadership of the two concurrent conventions. The "rumpers" had a large number of A. F. of L. officials, several Catholics with social-justice leanings, and the vigorous backing of Trotskyite elements in the Socialist Party. They accused the regular leaders of being "Communist stooges." "The people must decide," keynoted Owen Cunningham, chairman of the rump convention, "between communism on the one hand and Americanism on the other." And they unanimously indorsed Latimer.

Shortly after this development the regular convention set out to find a candidate of its own. A dark horse finally emerged in the person of Kenneth C. Haycraft, director of old-age assistance under the State Board of Control. Barely thirty, politically inexperienced, Haycraft had won fame in the football world as all-American end in 1928, and had practiced law upon his graduation from the University of Minnesota. As a protege of Governor Olson, whom he superficially resembled, he had helped to investigate the Northwest Bancorporation, and as a lieutenant in the National Guard he had raided the Citizens' Alliance, Minneapolis employers' organization, during the drivers' strike of 1934.

The Governor and his advisers, with a legislative fight on their hands, had vainly sent committees to patch things up. They were forced to hear the claims of the two candidates, recognize the Haycraft indorsement, and await the outcome. On April 21 both Latimer and Haycraft filed, and the fight was on. Haycraft attacked Latimer's record; Latimer attacked Haycraft's backing. Partisans of Haycraft sued to enjoin Latimer from using the party label; friends

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of Latimer instituted proceedings to oust Haycraft from his state job on grounds of political activity. On May 10, when the primaries came around, the machine split up, ward by ward. Haycraft won the nomination by less than 300 votes—25,486 to Latimer's 25,210. George E. Leach, the other nominee, polled 50,861, slightly more than the combined total of the two Farmer-Laborites. Einar Anderson, candidate of the South Side Business Men's Association, received 9,353 ballots.

Not the least significant item in the tabulation was the 893 votes that went to Ray Dunne in the primary. Dunne was the strategist of the militant Drivers' Local No. 544 and had contributed greatly to the development of trade unionism in Minneapolis. The leadership of 544, composed in equal measure of Trotsky's apostles and henchmen of Boss Tobin of the A. F. of L., was quick and loud in its repudiation of the Eagles' Hall convention that nominated Haycraft. Although Latimer had not always been on good terms with the drivers, it looked as if he would get their vote. At this point the Socialist Party, which had been planning to run Ray Dunne in the primaries, sent Harry Laidler and a committee of inquiry to the scene. The situation was further complicated by internal dissensions among the Socialists, some of whom were willing to indorse candidates of other parties while others remained intransigent. The intransigents won. Ray Dunne ran, and Latimer lost many more votes than he would have needed to carry the nomination.

The outcome of the primaries left the Farmer-Labor electorate in a condition of bewilderment, defeatism, and disgust. The breach had opened so wide that attempts to repair it immediately could only be makeshifts. Latimer did not demand a recount, but he took his time in coming out for Haycraft. Haycraft, in attacking Latimer's administration, had deprived himself of the electioneering advantages that go to an incumbent party. Latimer, in attacking Haycraft, had worked up such a red scare that Leach's supporters did not have to do more than echo it. Haycraft's running mates soft-pedaled him in the hope of catching some of the Leach vote. His campaign did not get under way until ten days before the election; literature was circulated only a week.

It was left for the Communists to open fire on the target. And with exuberance they filled their historic role. Clarence Hathaway came with two Minneapolis editions of the *Sunday Worker*, of which a hundred thousand copies in two colors were distributed in the labor wards. They stressed Leach's service in the militia bureau of the War Department, his remarks on the technique of quelling civil disturbances, the letter which prompted Senator Clark, at the time of the munitions investigation, to brand him a "poison-gas salesman." They enthusiastically indorsed the Farmer-Labor slate, and Haycraft, while acknowledging the aid rendered by Workers' Alliance groups before the primaries, began to suspect that the Communist Party had implanted the kiss of death on his brow.

The election was held on June 15, and when the votes were counted, Leach had 89,764, almost 18,000 more than Haycraft's 71,908. Farmer-Laborites hopefully noted that this was less than a landslide, though Leach had shown surprising strength in their own strongholds. Two of the three Farmer-Labor municipal judges were reelected, and the party kept its majority in the City Council.

So far we have had no formal introduction to Brigadier General Leach, the present Mayor of Minneapolis. This is Leach's fifth administration. Soon after the war the little colonel of the local 151st Artillery made an ideal candidate for the Republicans to run against the Socialist Mayor, Tom Van Lear. He was elected, and his eight years in office coincided with the curve of Republican prosperity. In 1923, with Floyd Olson as county attorney, Leach conducted a drive against the Ku Klux Klan which won him the unremitting gratitude of Catholic voters; in the last election, with Haycraft excommunicated by the red scare, he was still getting dividends on that gratitude. In 1926 Olson started a series of grand-jury investigations which succeeded in discrediting the municipal administration. After 1929 Leach lost his Republican support, and his two tries at reelection wer unsuccessful. Minneapolis thought then that it had his number. Now at sixty-one, he comes back an unknown quantity. He has become chary of party labels, and his posters read "independent, non-partisan, and progressive." But he has confessed himself "a Republican at heart," and the Republican caucus, having put forward no official candidate, voted as individuals for Leach. He publicly welcomed the support of the Citizens' Alliance, which in Minneapolis is almost an anti-labor pledge. On the other hand, he is not unpopular among conservative labor leaders. In two of his early campaigns, before he had broken any strikes, Leach actually secured Farmer-Labor indorsement. His 1936 campaign was managed by a former chairman of the Hennepin County Farmer-Labor Association, W. J. McGaughren, who has been covering himself with glory on the Board of Public Welfare by his efforts to remove telephones from the homes of relief clients.

Leach inaugurated his new regime by announcing that he was bound by no promises, that he was "mayor of all the people." He boasts of having picked up his new ideas from Hugh Johnson and George Berry while he was working on the NRA in Washington. For several weeks after assuming office he expounded the Wagner Act over the radio, broadly hinting to employers that even athletic clubs can be construed as bargaining agencies. In fulfilment of his promise to fight strikes out in his office, he will rely upon his contacts with Chicago union officials. He is disclaiming police responsibility in advance by giving Latimer's chief of police a free hand, but through McGaughren he is tightening his hold on the Welfare Board. Problems of labor, relief, and racketeering are sure to provide many tests of Leach's adroitness before he has a chance to run for governor next year.

But talk of a governor to succeed Elmer Benson is premature. As long as Benson can retain control of his own party he is safe. That is why so much has been made of the split in the Minneapolis election, and why certain groups are so determined to carry the rift over into the

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state convention next March. Meanwhile the newspapers are slowly crucifying Benson, whose outstanding quality is a kind of dogged honesty that is conceded by his enemies and despaired of by his friends. He is a more conscientious liberal and a more loyal party man than Floyd Olson ever was. The recent campaign was Benson's first. He had come from a country bank to the state Securities Division, been appointed state bank examiner, and finally picked by Olson to keep Tom Schall's seat warm for him in the United States Senate. Minnesota's present governor has so little political tact that he salutes his legislative opponents as "asinine, immoral, and dishonest." A veteran himself, he offended veterans last spring by the outspoken pacifism of his Memorial Day proclamation. Essentially a hard-working, mildly idealistic functionary, a good Lutheran and personally unassailable, he is being built up into a temperamental, wild-eyed radical.

But the Minneapolis split and the guerrilla war against Benson does not exhaust the complications for the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party. In the state Railroad and Warehouse Commission sulks Hjalmar Petersen, Danish-born editor of a newspaper at Askov (population, 350), an old-timer in the Farmer-Labor movement who was lieutenant governor when Olson died. He has never forgiven the party for not continuing him in the governor's office; every day he makes generous concessions to its critics and gathers about him all its disaffected forces. By utilizing a vein of bumptious cunning which is definitely in the Magnus Johnson tradition, he gets such a good press that outsiders are beginning to speak of him as that contradiction in terms, a "sensible" Farmer-Laborite.

Petersen's mentor is a Minneapolis criminal lawyer, Fred Ossanna, prominent among friends of the new Italy, as well as attorney for Local No. 544. Ray Dunne categorically affirms that the drivers will never support Petersen, but the latter is as capable of bolting as his friend McGaughren, and he is willing to accept the nomination from any group that will bestow it. Right-wing Farmer-Laborites, who believe it is worth while to soothe him, would like to see Senator Shipstead shelved, the governorship given to Petersen, and Benson kicked upstairs into the Senate, where his brief record of saying little, voting with the liberal bloc, and introducing the American Youth Act was generally admired. Left-wing Farmer-Laborites—who remember how much pressure was needed to keep Petersen from turning the militia on the Pillsbury strikers—do not want to see him governor again under any circumstances.

Benson is still the strongest candidate in his party. In Minnesota the Democrats have been comfortably split since 1932, and New Deal forces, friendly to Benson, were responsible for withdrawing the state ticket in the Presidential election last November. But the state Capitol is crowded with "Mexican generals," erstwhile Olson favorites and self-appointed Benson advisers, who are plotting a palace revolution. Their solution of the problem is to supplant the governor's secretary and closest friend, Roger Rutchick, an earnest St. Paul lawyer who gives Benson his ideological coaching. Rutchick is a Jew, and so are two or three other men in strategic positions—Abe Harris, editor of the party organ, the *Minnesota Leader,* and, in another category, Arthur Jacobs, secretary to the speaker of the House, well known among lobbyists. It is therefore not surprising that anti-Semitism should appear and that dark rumors of a party purge should circulate. But it is significant that the anti-Semitism and red-baiting are coming from within the party, from those who are trying to swing Benson to the right.

The Farmer-Labor Association is not well enough organized to talk of party discipline. An outstanding characteristic of the Minneapolis city convention was the race to pack it with non-affiliated delegates—technocrats, single-taxers, and members of veterans' organizations, sports clubs, and language groups, all who were ready to subscribe to third-party principles. Communists, Trotskyites, and others whose theories involve force are never directly represented in Farmer-Labor affairs; when they appear, they do so as elected delegates of unions and affiliates. Neither Ray Dunne nor the state secretary of the Communist Party, Nat Ross, directing tactics from opposite corners of Eagles' Hall, had any official status. Such conflicts of jurisdiction, shifting allegiances, internal clashes of interest among heterogeneous social groups make a precarious foundation for a political movement.

The disciplinary instrument of a democratic party is patronage. The backbone of the Farmer-Labor machine in the Twin Cities is formed by the ward clubs, dominated by state employees. Since 1930, when the party captured the state, there has been an influx of job-seekers, but there were still so many hold-overs in office this spring that the governor's group could not afford to let a civil-service bill pass. This gave Petersen and the press another opportunity for criticism, and lent color to the widespread impression of maladministration. It led to the somewhat paradoxical situation of business interests attacking progressives in the name of good government.

A reform party in power is more vulnerable than other parties to hidden dangers that only come to light when a legislator changes his vote, or when a legislature plays with some high-minded measure for the sole purpose of shaking down the vested interests. Its enemies are more united than its members; they can undermine it with bribes, condemn it with editorials, and trust the inertia of tired progressives to bog it down. Eastern liberals, into whose scheme of things the Farmer-Labor label fits very neatly, must at least be made aware of local complexities. They must recognize that although Minnesota is the sole third-party state, it is by no means the most socialized; that its reforms might even have been accomplished within the Republican Party but for the steel trust in the north and the "politically backward" southern part of the state; that its radicalism is a product of material circumstances rather than of ideology. It is true that the Farmer-Labor platform of 1934 contained a few Marxist terms, but that document is now notorious in party circles as "the platform that had to be interpreted." A veteran of the movement succinctly expressed its purpose as an attempt to "chisel a little bit out of the capitalistic system."

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

WHATEVER else may be said about the temper of the American people, there can be no doubt that they are today united in their opposition to being drawn into another war. Even if a European conflagration should take place, I should be quite optimistic about our staying out of it. I have not forgotten the effectiveness of the British propaganda in 1914-17, or the results of our business and financial entanglements with the Allies. But I am heartened by signs on every side that the lessons of the World War are not forgotten. The American Legion at its New York meeting, for example, took a strong stand against further experiments in making the world safe for democracy. One may not agree with its recommendations for safeguarding the country, but one must feel grateful that it stood so unequivocally for peace.

Even the Secretary of War, whose Assistant Secretary, Mr. Johnson, constantly demands a greatly increased regular army and rates us as less effective from a military standpoint than Sweden, told the Legion of his satisfaction that it made no "fantastic recommendations for a huge standing army or for an unbalanced expansion of one arm to the detriment of other branches." He also warned the veterans not to take sides in hostilities abroad and urged them to follow Washington leadership in "problems in which the preservation of our own peace and neutrality is of final importance." He wound up by calling upon them "to recognize and scotch any propaganda which might lead to our involvement in a foreign war. Preserve for yourselves and posterity that priceless boon of liberty that can be secured only through a lasting peace." This is in delightful contrast with the spread-eagle speeches which we have had from high officials in the past, and beyond question it is a politician's recognition of the mood of the country today. The Administration certainly knows what the people are thinking on this issue. The Seattle *Post-Intelligencer* has been taking a poll on whether the United States should withdraw both its citizens and its troops from China, and the vote has been overwhelmingly in favor of getting out. At one stage of the voting the proportion was as high as thirty-seven to one. Similar polls in California have shown similar results, which is the more remarkable in view of the closeness of the tie between California and the Orient. It is safe to say that the White House mail reflects a like trend.

Another reason for believing that there is little danger of our being drawn into a future war is the strength and vigor of the peace movement. I have already called attention to the fact that the National Peace Conference now represents approximately forty peace organizations, many of them with millions of members. It is the first cooperative front ever formed by the peace movement in this country. That does not mean that it always presents a solid front. The constituent organizations have the right to their own interpretation of events, and if they disagree with the decisions of the conference they take their own stand. Thus, there is a strong division of opinion as to whether the United States should or should not put the Neutrality Act into effect, but there is no division whatsoever in the determination to keep the country out of war. These organizations are not going to be fooled again by foreign propaganda. Indeed, whereas there was colossal public ignorance of European affairs in 1914-17, there is today, notably in the universities, a very large body of persons who are thoroughly conversant with what is going on abroad. In 1914 there were almost no editorial writers outside the cities of the Atlantic seaboard and Chicago who understood foreign conditions. Today there are many all over the country, and the press is maintaining abroad a remarkable corps of well-informed correspondents.

More than that, the peace movement has long since got beyond the stage of deprecating war on purely sentimental grounds. On September 19 the National Peace Conference began a nation-wide campaign for economic disarmament with an international broadcast. The first speaker was the Secretary of State. He was followed by representatives of the leading nations, including Anthony Eden, a spokesman for Premier Chautemps of France, Prime Minister King of Canada, and the President of Colombia. This campaign will continue through the winter. It has the approval of the Administration and is being warmly supported by the League of Nations Association of Canada. It is bound to do much in educating the American people to the necessity of lower tariffs and the advisability of giving the less favored nations free access to raw materials. The National Peace Conference declares that the American people must understand that between 1914 and 1918 their position changed from that of a debtor to that of a creditor power. It will take up the question of the possible liquidation of war debts and will urge the United States to cooperate with the other nations of the world, directly and through the peace machinery, in establishing international economic and social justice. It takes as its motto these words of Secretary Hull: "Many nations are caught today in a stifling net of mutual distrust, of political hostility, of an exhausting and suicidal race for military power, of continuing economic warfare. A demobilization of all these armaments—moral, political, military, and economic—is necessary for durable peace."

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BOOKS *and the* ARTS

Giovanni the Tranquil

THE TRANQUIL HEART. A PORTRAIT OF GIOVANNI BOCCACCIO. By Catherine Carswell. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.50.

IT WAS by one of his contemporaries that Boccaccio was first called "Giovanni della Tranquillità." At first sight that sobriquet may not seem very appropriate to a man whose two crucial experiences appear to have been the agonizing love affair of his youth and that sudden fear of hell fire which seized upon him in old age. But perhaps those experiences were not really typical, and there is no missing the fact that the "Decameron" is a tranquil book. It is serenely objective, and it seems to imply a happy acquiescence in a naturalistic vision of the world more amiable than any to which his contemporaries could attain. Even Boccaccio himself could not hold it long, for none of his other works achieve an inclusive equilibrium. Except for the "Fiammetta" they are grotesquely disrupted by the conflict between the worldliness which was his own and the other-worldliness which was a part of the tradition that he inherited. But the universe of the ten days is a universe in which men could be tranquilly at home. Life is gay, and it is not without meaning for those who can love. Best of all, love is not something which even a Dante can with difficulty conceive. Love is the mother of all things, and men need only love as best they can. No more is asked of each than each can give, and it is better to have loved like a clown than never to have loved at all.

Miss Carswell has evidently felt the charm of Boccaccio's character, and her chief purpose seems to have been to claim for a favorite the admiration due him. One can hardly feel very warmly about Petrarch, and affection for Dante would assuredly be an odd impertinence; but Miss Carswell feels warmly about Boccaccio and for obvious reasons. He was a modest man possessed of a certain sweetness, and he is less impressive than his two great contemporaries partly because he is so much nearer and so much more understandable than they. By his own confession the "Decameron" was written chiefly for "the ladies," and there was something in his attitude toward them which was neither gross nor too high-flown—something which was far more "modern" than the romantic love which Dante is generally credited with having invented but which remains for Dante a branch of theology and, as such, rather cold comfort for those whom he deemed worthy of it.

In view of all this it is odd that Miss Carswell should have devoted so much of her pleasantly written book not to literary interpretation, which obviously interests her most, but to inevitably scrappy history and those formal biographical details which are completely enough set forth in the standard biographies of Edward Hutton and H. Hauvette, as well as in the more recent one by the American, Caldecot Chubb. Perhaps the reason is the same as the reason why the originality of Boccaccio's compact of peace with the universe has been given rather less prominence than it deserves in the history of the human spirit. He is not intellectual, he never formulated in abstract terms the basis of his "tranquillity," and when in his minor works he either reasons or allegorizes he is unmistakably absurd. Boccaccio did not think his way through the moral and philosophical problems of his age. Those ten days of his constitute only a sunny interlude between medieval austerity and the brutality of the later Renaissance. He could not recover them for himself or tell others how they happened to be.

Miss Carswell mentions the "Amorosa Visione," last of his apprentice works, but she lays little stress on the incident which seems to me to reveal more of Boccaccio's mind than any other in any of his works. Urged by an angel to enter the narrow gate which leads to salvation, he chooses instead the broad portal of this world, explaining as he does so that he will return in time to go in at the other. Boccaccio was neither an atheist nor a philosopher. His solution of the difficulty was not witty or cynical; it was merely childlike. As a matter of fact, he did return, and only the persuasion of Petrarch changed his resolution to burn his books. But meanwhile the "Decameron" had been written. Other men could rationalize and make permanent the doctrine of "one world at a time." Boccaccio had been merely a truant.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

The Dark Brother

YOUNG HENRY OF NAVARRE. By Heinrich Mann. Translated from the German by Eric Sutton. Alfred A. Knopf. $3.

HEINRICH MANN has more in him of "Buddenbrooks" than of "The Magic Mountain." He, like his protagonist, Henry of Navarre, is "firm set upon the wonted heavy earth." And on this earth, as Monsieur de Montaigne advises the young king, the lowest level is the safest. Distinctions between the moral attributes are dubious, for must not the good man also work injustice, while truth again may be a lie preached long enough. But when all rush to the side of "honor" and scorn that of "infamy," it may be assumed that honor has a great deal of money, and infamy little. In an uncertain world certain it is that self-preservation is the object of most human contemplation, each man wanting only a special assurance for his own life and goods, and that "all should suffer save himself." And this is a reasonable basis, for if convictions of hatred are sometimes preached by those with neither convictions nor hatred, yet the most sincere belief can accomplish as much harm. "It is no better," thinks young Henry, "to split the kingdom over a matter of faith than to parcel it out for personal profit." Sincere beliefs, however, except one, are few in the pages of Heinrich Mann; an accomplished and urbane delineator of complex emotions, of affection most poignant when interwoven with guilt and malevolence, his turnings turn always back to his central thesis. Every flush of feeling no less than highest principle has its personal source and compensation; love itself is more love when it is self-love. To this dark brother, indeed, the meaning of virtue, not of time, is a subject for wonder; the pursuit of art leads not to beauty but to cunning; speculations as to our earthly ends yield to strategies of gaining them; and no removal from life is more suspect than life itself.

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If Barnum Were Alive . . .

He would probably find a career in cereals, where circus tactics outweigh actual virtues as sales appeals, to his liking. A report on 37 brands, including Quaker Oats, Shredded Wheat, and Grape Nuts, shows most cereals to be cheap foods in expensive forms; gives tables showing the relative costs of brands in terms of the number of calories one cent will buy. (A cent will buy from as little as 40 calories to as much as 290 calories depending on the brand you select.)

Price-Fixing

The Tydings-Miller price-fixing bill passed in the last session of Congress raises prices, makes the high cost of living a more serious problem than it was before. An article and an editorial give the consumer's side of the story and tell what to do about price-fixing.

Oil Burners and Coal Stokers

Engineers' Advice on Heating Systems

Numerous makes of automatic oil and coal heating equipment are compared and rated on the score of efficiency and economy. Nearly a hundred makes of oil burners, coal stokers, boilers, and hand-fired coal furnaces are rated as "Best Buys," "Also Acceptable," and "Not Acceptable."

Auto Radios

One of the 14 models in this report is rated as a "Best Buy." Two are "Not Acceptable." Arvin, Motorola, and Philco models are included in the ratings. In addition to ratings on the basis of price and quality, rankings are given on the basis of performance alone. Advice is also given on which type of auto aerial to use.

Women's Slips

Some Are Part Lead

Twenty-seven rayon and silk slips, ranging in price from 69c to $2.98, are rated on the basis of tests. A few brands were heavily weighted with lead or tin salts, a few were misleadingly labeled.

Winter Motor Oils

Household Oils and Typewriters

Three reports give ratings of winter motor oils and household oils and preliminary recommendations on portable typewriters for the benefit of students and others who must buy a machine this month. Next month's issue will report in full the results of extensive tests on portable models of the best known machines.

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☐ Aug.-Sept. — Refrigerators, Photographic Films, Ice Cream, Inner Tubes, Raincoats.
☐ Oct.—Oil Burners & Coal Stokers, Auto Radios, Breakfast Cereals, Women's Slips.

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The previous translations of Heinrich Mann have not done justice to these powers. "The Royal Woman" was a lighter reflection of them, intended to entertain. "The Hill of Lies," more illuminating in thesis, was limited in its scene. In "Young Henry of Navarre," however, we have a better illustration of Heinrich Mann's ability and philosophy. Could, in truth, the deepest skepticism as to the uses of this world pick a finer object-lesson than the court of the last of the Valois kings—this court in which fantastic pageants vie with studied massacres, and all the devices of pleasure with those of unchecked power; this court which, with its gloves of flower petals, its dwarfs, black pages, and birds "from the Islands," its Latin lore, quaint pastorals, witty languishments, and prodigal promiscuity, embodies so futilely all the forms of human desire? Can one select a more malicious picture of man himself than the ostensible hero of this society, Charles IX, bleeding in body and uncertain of spirit, both mad and pretending madness, gross and weary at twenty-three, pitiable, terrified, and cruel, and ludicrous in his last sufferings?

Such is the scene of the young Henry's rise to greatness, and Heinrich Mann has done it excellently, with irony and a deceptive geniality, with historical imagination, and with a noteworthy gallery of portraits: Guise and his sister Montpensier, Margot and Henry Valois, Coligny, Montaigne himself, and, perhaps the finest study of all, Catherine de' Medici, this Queen Mother of France who preferred her fellows beneath the earth. It is probable that the author concerns himself rather too strictly with these personages at the expense of the social trends and the life of the people themselves. There is again an emphasis on the melodramatic, and on action rather than fresh analysis of character or event. But if Heinrich Mann does not add to our knowledge of the period, he has the sense of its life, he does indeed create it again. "Young Henry of Navarre" is an important and in some respects a frightening historical novel. It is important in itself as a vital and colorful work. It is frightening in its picture of Europe beyond this dying and extravagant Valois court—the lands warring with each other and divided by civil wars; the towns stricken; the starving people no longer hoping for any salvation but wanting only excitement, self-importance, and dance of death. For at times "Young Henry of Navarre," the first novel of Heinrich Mann since his exile from Germany, seems the future rather than the past. MAXWELL GEISMAR

Spying on Labor

THE LABOR SPY RACKET. By Leo Huberman. Modern Age Books. 35 cents.

SPY OVERHEAD. By Clinch Calkins. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

LABOR SPY. By GT-99. The Bobbs-Merrill Company. $2.50.

THE printed proceedings of the La Follette subcommittee of the Senate which has been investigating the business of fighting organized labor now fill fourteen volumes. Several other volumes are in preparation, and the committee has $25,000 more to spend on its good work. Few official records have so fully revealed the depravity of modern American capitalism and the readiness of the individual big business man to play a dirty game. Stool pigeons of high and low station, from the elegant, manicured Allan Pinkerton to the unwashed "hookers," finks ranging from the feeble-minded slugger Michael (Red) Casey to the canny ruffian Chowderhead Cohen, now happily once more in jail, regaled the committee with the stories of their traffic, the details of which are at the moment too well known to need repetition. But popular familiarity with the labor-spying and strike-breaking profession is likely to be short-lived. The biggest culprit, the Railway Audit and Inspection Company, has thus far managed to evade the net of the committee. It and other agencies, we may be certain, will be back at the old stand once the committee has completed its work. Regulation of spying and strike-breaking by law is almost impossible; most of such activity has always been beyond the border line of legality. As well attempt to regulate murder and arson, both of which, incidentally, have been on occasion instruments of the union-smashing profession. The continued operation of the Wagner Act and the unhampered functioning of the National Labor Relations Board will, of course, help, but the business of combating labor will continue as long as the differences between labor and capital continue.

The books of Miss Calkins and Mr. Huberman will serve a good purpose if labor will use them to understand these forces which are arrayed against them, and to draw from the facts the lesson of solidarity. The best safeguard against a labor spy is a well-organized, honestly run, and democratic union. The best answer to organized strike-breaking is solidarity on the picket line. Mr. Huberman's book will be especially helpful in this respect. Its style is more direct, and it seems to be intended primarily for the working-class reader. Miss Calkins goes to some pains to argue the general immorality of the business, an argument that trade-union members will not need. Both volumes suffer from having been built up too faithfully from testimony before the committee; a more effective treatment would have been to reorganize the facts into a consecutive narrative. But every worker should have a copy of "The Labor Spy Racket," and every business man and every member of the middle class who wants to be fair toward labor should read "Spy Overhead."

We come now to a third by-product of the work of the La Follette committee. Its publishers insist that "Labor Spy" is authentic, not ghost-written. That may be, though there is internal evidence to the contrary. But whether or not "Labor Spy" is what it claims to be, it is a vicious book. GT-99, the completely disguised author, would have us believe that for twenty years he plied the profession of labor spy, and that by and large he made a helpful contribution to American labor and industry. From his first meeting with the head of the spy agency, who had a smile that "was worth waiting for because his face lit up all over and it made you glad to know someone who could smile like that," GT-99 lived a life by which he saved employers from saboteurs and lazy and incompetent workmen, helped win promotions for deserving workers, exposed racketeers, helped organize National Guard companies. He served patriotically in France during the World War and returned to his profession to become the virtual boss of a state federation of labor. We learn from GT-99 and his smiling chief the "true" picture of labor espionage—not the shabby lies and vile betrayals which were revealed day after day in sworn testimony before the La Follette committee. We are asked to believe that the profession has stood like a bulwark against the destruction of American business. The effrontery of the book is unbelievable. This real or synthetic labor spy sets himself up as a judge of the motives of other men, as a regulator of industrial morals. A closing chapter offers GT-99's views on the C. I. O., the closed shop, and other issues. We may now expect some publisher to offer us a book on medicine by a convicted quack. EDWARD LEVINSON

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Europa in Melodrama

EUROPA IN LIMBO. By Robert Briffault. Charles Scribner's Sons. $2.75.

ROBERT BRIFFAULT'S sequel to "Europa" seems to be constructed on the theory that rape multiplied by murder equals history. In this new volume, which if anything is more fleshy and flamboyant than its predecessor, the World War in the West and social revolution in the East provide Julian Bern, its protagonist, with both a close-up of Europe in breakdown and an extraordinary communist education; and all along, during his grand tour of European science, philosophy, politics, morals, and sex, he is flung into so many explosive situations, cataclysmic events, and torrid experiences —all rehearsing the crash of society—that finally the very opposite of what is intended happens, and lechery, corruption, and catastrophe become as prosaic as breakfast, office, and sleep.

Indulging his oceanic appetite for human beings, Mr. Briffault rolls up his characters in waves that sweep the novel to its innumerable climaxes, each one of which sees capitalism thrashed to within an inch of its life. Yet Julian, who combines the qualities of Christ and Marx, and is both ubiquitous and omniscient, dominates the scene. Being in the confidence of working-class leaders, bourgeois generals, ladies of fashion, lords, ministers, spies, and prostitutes, he turns up at every point in time or space where either dramatic events or ideological debates are in progress. He arrives at the program of the Third International long before that organization had come into existence; on leave from the battlefields of France and the orgies in Paris and London, he runs into Lenin in the mountains of Switzerland, and there, during a brief chat, the latter outlines for him the main principles of his strategy; you will find him in the inner chambers of the British Foreign Office, at the general headquarters of the Allied armies, in Petrograd during the October days, at the front with the White Guards, and in bedrooms where Bolshevik girls are literally torn to pieces by enemy officers. The Russian Princess Zena loves him, but like the state she withers away in the free air of socialism. Though she is a woman of good-will, the author cannot permit her to survive the fall of her class. The Russian parts of the story are, indeed, particularly slovenly and lacking in verisimilitude. The episodes described are exactly the same as those in a hundred other books, and for the sake of local color nearly all the characters are constantly drinking tea, chewing sunflower seeds, and eating cabbage soup. But Julian does not stay long in Russia, and toward the end of the book, as the melodrama of Europe runs its course, he is threatening to expatriate himself and start a magazine in America.

Within this novel, thus crammed with homicidal horrors and uproarious with the groans, sighs, and slaverings produced by carnal excess, no intensity is possible, and the infamies described become as unreal as the men and women who commit them. Mr. Briffault's method is too erudite and statistical to succeed in reproducing the atmosphere of passion and perversion; and in his didactic zeal he empties all relations of their human content and turns them into angry sermons of class morality. As a popular philosopher, however, Mr. Briffault is interesting for his eccentric disposition, which in its composite effect recalls to us such diverse figures as H. L. Mencken, Benjamin De Casseres, Nietzsche, Dean Inge, and William S. Hart with a smoking gun in each hand and tears in his eyes.

PHILIP RAHV

No Sanctuary

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF A SPANISH TOWN. By Elliot Paul. Random House. $2.50.

WHEN Elliot Paul returned to the Spanish island town of Santa Eulalia, he was convinced that its satisfying way of life would be preserved indefinitely. The July, 1936, troubles on the mainland had already begun, but he was so far removed from political embroilments that he was not aware of disorders. He returned to take his place as leader of the community orchestra without thought of change; he had found a haven in the little fishing town that for all its inequalities and imperfections had produced less meanness than any other part of the world he knew. Santa Eulalia had a common life in which the cafe, the street, the daily activities of each person were vital to all. The first part of "Life and Death of a Spanish Town" is largely a record of this way of life, almost ancient in its communal blessings. For Elliot Paul the very daylight becomes brighter in memory. The people, his friends, are burnished by the fact that wherever they may be—those that still survive—he will never again see them as they were. In this perspective the town takes on the perfection of a place perceived in a dream world. In the second part of the book, when the purpose unfolds, this vision of the town becomes justified.

Santa Eulalia was not a political hotbed. Not a score of men were interested either in fascism or communism. It had some good staunch republicans who hoped for mild reforms that would take power from the church and redistribute the land. The people were no more concerned with religion than the inhabitants of any other town of Spain; and the masses of the Spanish people are not religious. The fishermen of Santa Eulalia were frankly unbelievers. Church might do for the women; cafes were for the men. Yet the church perched like a hawk on the hill overlooking the town and secretly helped to deliver it over to Italian captivity.

All the elements of high tragedy are compact within the brief history of the few months during which the people struggled to right themselves against the storm. At first the town was overconfident; the new government had been overwhelmingly elected, and the republicans were the talkers now. The royalists plotted behind closed shutters and the priests continued to be mysterious, leading lives that were detached from the common village scene. The majority of the island folk wanted only to fish and eat, to be at peace, and to secure a few more advantages for their children than they had enjoyed themselves. Paul mixed with royalists as well as anarchists and republicans; loving human beings, he saw good qualities wherever they happened to be. It was a total surprise to the republican element when the royalist crowd began talking more openly. Jibes at priests, sure signs of good times for republicans, were smothered. The republicans, taken by surprise, were disarmed; and royalists, fully armed from secret arsenals, sprang up like mushrooms.

The people waited for a sign from the mainland and, miraculously, government forces from Valencia and Barcelona were dispatched and succeeded in landing and in restoring order with little bloodshed. Then occurred one of those horrible circumstances which make up the history of wars: troops needed for the defense of Madrid withdrew, and left the island to local militia. Normal living seemed again within reach when the black Italian bombers began their onslaught. The day before the Italian troops arrived, Paul and those leaders still alive escaped. From this terrible education Paul

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emerged completely and wholly a part of the common fate. The genial orchestra leader who in the first part of the book merely loved mankind became the passionate defender of those rights that make men human.

The real value of "Life and Death of a Spanish Town" lies not in the portraits, marvelously precise though they are, but in the almost blueprint quality of the presentation of the town's development. The predicament of the human being in society today is all the more convincing here because it is inclosed within the unit of a village. But the threat abroad in the world does not stop at Santa Eulalia.

JOSEPHINE HERBST

The Irish "Trouble"

DEATH IN DUBLIN. By Frank O'Connor. Doubleday, Doran and Company. $2.50.

FAMINE. By Liam O'Flaherty. Random House. $2.50.

MUSEUM. By James L. Phelan. William Morrow and Company. $2.50.

THE best statement of Ireland's last hundred years of civil war is to be found in W. B. Yeats's "Words for Music Perhaps" and in his "Three Songs to the Same Tune." In these he "increased their fantasy, their extravagance, their obscurity, that no party might sing them." That is to say, he names no names. Yet here the familiars of Irish life, which are madness, wit, self-betrayal, sentimentality, famine, and a sense of guilt, convey their reality with greater force than the present books by Mr. O'Connor, Mr. O'Flaherty, and Mr. Phelan. I suspect that the neurotic face of poverty that confronts England across the Irish Sea is a reality too terrifying to be sustained by such lesser works of art as a brisk melodrama disguised as biography, an honestly conceived and written historical novel, and a pathetic memoir of life in an English jail. It is little wonder that we hear so much of "Irish charm" and of "dear, dirty Dublin," that we hear instructions to "cover the face, mine eyes dazzle"—for the real death in Dublin is too terrible to bear.

Mr. O'Connor, who is by no means one of the least able of the younger Irish writers, has written a curiously elliptical life of Michael Collins, who is well known as the hero of the 1916-21 "trouble" in Ireland. He gives us something that would make a far better scenario than the script of "Beloved Enemy," yet the realities of Michael Collins's position as Minister for Finance in the Dail Eireann must be read between the lines of machine-gunfire narrative and Mr. O'Connor's wholly gratuitous opinions. "Beside him [Michael Collins]," Mr. O'Connor writes, "Lenin, with his theories, feuds, and excommunications, seems a child, and not a particularly intelligent one. He ran the whole revolution as though it were a great business concern, ignoring all the rules." From this page onward, which happens to be page 78, sensible disagreement with Mr. O'Connor seems futile; Michael Collins becomes his property, his hero of an exciting legend, and it is not always possible to discern the moment when an extravagant claim for mere heroism shades into fact. Yet Mr. O'Connor's chapter on the signing of the Treaty of 1921 should be read as a warning to men of action in revolutionary tactics. Michael Collins, prematurely aged by three years of continuous, day-by-day, almost sleepless activity, was completely outgeneraled in 1921 by De Valera. At the London conference Collins was forced to compro-

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mise with the members of the right opposition in his own delegation. De Valera, who held a position near the center of the Dail Eireann, saw his chance and took it. In that short moment he stood to the left of Collins and with a cool refusal to swear allegiance to the British Crown, he voiced Collins's death warrant. Collins returned to Dublin a broken man; it was almost an act of mercy to end his life with a bullet shot from ambush.

Even the most casual reader of Irish biography and history knows well that the actual "trouble" in Ireland dates back to the famine of 1845. This is the year that Mr. O'Flaherty has chosen for the date-line of his new book, which is, I believe, remembering all the others, the best historical novel of the past five years. This may seem dubious praise, but Mr. O'Flaherty has proved for the reader of popular fiction that the historical novel need not contain the hackneyed props and properties of swords and roses, graced with obvious, if quite unconscious, reactionary sentiment. It is a carefully detailed reconstruction of life within an Irish village in the year of the potato blight; the book opens with the coming of the terror and closes with the escape of its hero and heroine to America. Every character in the book —peasant, land agent, merchant, priest, and petty tradesman—is treated as though he were in fact a historical personage, each assuming proper dignity and stature. In this sense Mr. O'Flaherty's book makes a legitimate claim to being a genuinely proletarian novel. The economic facts of history are clearly illuminated through the lives of his people; and Mr. O'Flaherty is also clearly placed on the side of humanity fighting against the abuses of economic power controlled by British imperialism. This, of course, is no more than an abstract statement of Mr. O'Flaherty's brilliant narrative; he neither preaches for a lost cause nor applies his rules of economic destiny with a heavy hand: all but his peasant-girl heroine, who at odd moments seems a shade too good to be true—even to the hero—are well-rounded, living creatures. "Famine" is Mr. O'Flaherty's best novel since the publication of "The Informer"; and it would seem that he is one of the few writers of his generation in Ireland who is at last fulfilling the promise of his earlier work.

Mr. Phelan's "Museum" is advertised as another "find" in current Irish fiction, but its story of prison life seems a mere repetition of several other novels of life in "stir." Its only distinction is a note of pathos, untouched by sentimentality or false emotion, which is rare in any book of its kind and yet explains why, when prison officials read it, none was offended.

HORACE GREGORY

DRAMA

And Treat of Love

LAST week an obviously play-hungry public greeted two new offerings with rather more cordiality than either can be said to deserve on its own merits. One is "Blow Ye Winds" (Forty-sixth Street Theater), a polite piece which may be a comedy and may be a drama; the other is "George and Margaret" (Morosco Theater), which is certainly comedy if it is substantial enough to deserve a name. Both are well mounted and treat of love.

The author of "Blow Ye Winds," an American named Valentine Davies, writes the more conventional and expected of his scenes with considerable force, but there is a kind of tentativeness about the conception and most of the writing which suggests a playwright who is still learning his trade. The two chief characters are a lady psychologist (rather more of a prig than the author apparently intended) and a young misfit who scorns ambition in order to sail a fishing boat. They fall in love; the question is whether or not they can make a go of it; and the first of the author's several uncertainties seems to be whether the thing is a romantic comedy or a problem play. It is more conventional but surer-footed when being the latter; a bit stumbling when it tries to be the former. In each of the three acts the two characters concerned think for a while that love is enough and for a while that it isn't; so that when they are last seen in an embrace one is not sure there is any good reason why they shouldn't go on to the end of time temporarily making up their minds one way or the other. Nor does one care too much. Neither the lady nor the gentleman interests us very deeply in what one tends—surely a fatal thing for a drama—to dismiss as their private affair. In fact, there is really only one compelling incident—that in which the vocational psychologist who fits others into their niches confesses that he doesn't want to be a psychologist at all. The humor of the incident depends partly upon a bit of writing crisper than most of the rest; even more, perhaps, upon the crisp playing of Edgar Stehli, who earned and got a very pleasant round of applause at the end of his few moments on the stage.

"George and Margaret," which comes to us after a triumphant success in London, might be called an English version of "You Can't Take It with You" because it also deals with the humors of an eccentric family which lets itself go. But while the Americans play the xylophone in the parlor and make fireworks in the cellar, their English counterparts (they have a longer tradition and more to live up to, you know) merely carry reserve and the art of minding their own business to such a point that the pater doesn't notice when his wife isn't at the breakfast table and that one of the sons marries the housemaid without causing his sister or his brother to raise an eyelash. It is all amusing enough in its amiable way, though here too the whole effect was mild enough to leave me free for certain speculations suggested by the young man who holds out for marriage against the girl who is all for promiscuity—in a nice way. That young man is turning up very frequently in contemporary plays and has set me wondering if he is, perhaps, merely the product of dramaturgic necessity.

What I mean is this. Continence, or at least a certain amount of reluctance real or stimulated, may or may not be necessary for the good life. But one thing is certain. Reluctance of some sort is absolutely indispensable in plays which treat of love. Somebody has got to be coy if the play is to last one act, let alone three. And if smartness requires that the women should have no old-fashioned scruples, then obviously the men have got to begin to draw back. Or is it possible that the playwrights are really only holding the mirror up to nature? That the worldly proverb will soon be reversed to read that it's the business of a woman to remain unmarried as long as she can and that of a man to hold out for assurances of honor and permanence? Who knows but that we may have to go through with the whole question of the double standard again and greet the appearance of a "new man" to whom his chosen will have to say, in the words of a once popular song, "You ask no questions, so why should I?"

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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RECORDS

BEETHOVEN'S Piano Sonato Opus 106, the so-called "Hammerklavier," has for several years been available on records only in an orchestral version made by Weingartner. Now two recordings of the work in its original form are to be had: one made by Schnabel and released by subscription in Volume 10 of H. M. V.'s Beethoven Sonata Society; the other made by Kempff for Polydor and repressed by Brunswick (five records $7.50). The Schnabel version takes a sixth record—which means two more breaks; and it costs twice as much. In addition, the performance is—in the ways in which Schnabel's performances are sometimes flawed—one of his worst. The sense for the outline of a phrase, the larger outlines of a movement, is one of the outstanding things in Schnabel's playing; but there are times when such outlines are distorted by excessive emotional intensity or intellectual pretentiousness; also there are times when his technique falls short of what is demanded of it; and both things happen in the "Hammerklavier" performance, in which the slovenliness of execution in some places exceeds anything I can recall. Kempff's performance, on the other hand, is accurate, clear, always under control, and guided by a fine musical taste. But the occasional excesses of Schnabel's performances are excesses of an essential strength—the driving intensity and force that are in the work itself, and that are lacking in Kempff's performance. Also, the defects in Schnabel's performance are only occasional; for the greater part of the time one hears not manifestations of excessive intensity and technical inadequacy but the impress of an extraordinary mind and personality; and in the end the choice is between the flawed performance of a great artist and the unflawed performance of a lesser artist.

Brunswick also has released a fine performance by Kempff of Bach's French Suite No. 5 (one record, $1.50). And Bach's English Suite No. 3 receives an equally fine performance from Alexander Borovsky (three ten-inch records, $3.50). Both of these works have movements which I find more than ordinarily enjoyable; and one movement in the English Suite—the Sarabande—is magnificent. Borovsky is also heard in Mozart's Variations K 500 (one record, $1.50), which are inconsequential. In everything I have discussed so far the recording is good; but Borovsky's performance of Liszt's Etude in F minor is poorly recorded; and that holds for the work which, on the reverse side, is labeled Liszt's "Au bord d'une source" but which is actually Albéniz's "Malaga" ($1.50).

As for the Brunswick-Polydor orchestral releases, Furtwängler's impressive talents as a conductor are revealed in playing of extraordinarily fine quality by the Berlin Philharmonic, excellently recorded, in the Overture to "The Barber of Seville" (one record, $1.50) and the Overture to "Der Freischütz" (two records, $3). For two sides of the "Freischütz" Overture I was amazed by the new simplicity, directness, and poise of his performance; on the third side, in the concluding section of the work, the old concern with effect and lack of control made their appearance again. Not quite so well recorded is a spirited and clear performance of the Overture to "The Bartered Bride" by the Berlin State Opera Orchestra under Melichar (one record, $1.50).

B. H. HAGGIN

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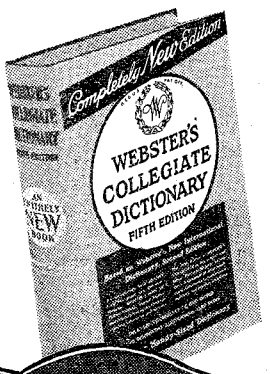

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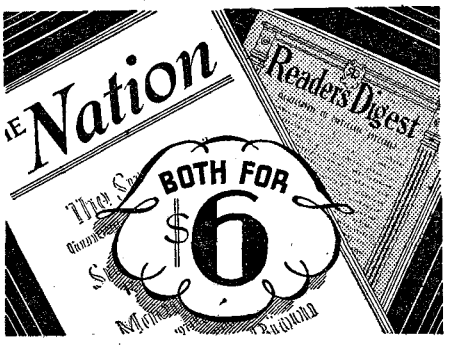

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Henry Ford's Sermons from Dearborn

by Harvey Pinney

A keen analysis of the economic religion of Henry Ford as preached on the Sunday evening Ford Radio Hour by High Priest W. J. Cameron.

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by Ludwig Lore

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Letters to the Editors

The Nation and Mr. Black

Dear Sirs: When I read your face-saving editorial on Justice Black in the issue of September 18, I became aware of a feeling that the once independent *Nation*, which I have read for some years, was weakly squirming in an uncomfortable position. Your insistence that you will continue to defend Black, "unless it can be proved beyond doubt that he has consciously maintained his connection, if it ever existed, with the Klan," causes me to wonder what degree of unconsciousness will excuse one's missteps, and whether one who is to sit upon the Supreme Court bench shouldn't be conscious of a duty to speak up on those occasions when the people have a clear right to know the truth.

After attacking those who dare to raise the issue of Black's fitness as the "hysterical and reactionary opposition," the editorial meekly suggests that Mr. Black must explain his Klan connection "in justice to his friends." Having been taken in by one of its liberal buddies, *The Nation* seems to plead tearfully, like the mother of a wayward son, "Tell me it isn't true."

The Nation would do the American people a greater service by condemning the unseemly haste with which this man's appointment was confirmed, without proper investigation or public hearings, and the haste and secrecy with which he took the oath of office, than by leaning backward in an endeavor to justify its previous stand.

MEYER WEKER

Boston, September 18

Poverty in Italy

Dear Sirs: An aspect of present-day Italy which escapes the notice of most foreign observers traveling in the country is the distressing shortage of certain important food products, particularly milk, butter, and cheese. Bread is rationed at the rate of one kilogram a day per family. A common sight on the outskirts of towns is people with little baskets gathering every conceivable kind of edible herb.

According to figures issued by the local authorities in Milan, the population of that city consumed only thirty-six kilograms of meat per person in 1936. As a matter of fact, the great majority of people had a considerably smaller share, while those better situated, especially the Fascist leaders, consumed much more. And it must be remembered that no other city in Italy has a standard of living approaching that of the great industrial capital of Lombardy. The corresponding figure for Milan in 1933, in the trough of the world economic depression, was thirty-nine kilograms per person.

Foreign journalists and travelers who admire Italy's fine new motor roads, public buildings, and railway coaches seldom go to rural districts like Calabria, where the peasants have only one meal a day—consisting chiefly of bread. Such conditions explain why in certain districts as many as 1,000 out of a population of 6,000 reported for enlistment for the Ethiopian war. In Italy these men were popularly called "volontari della fame," or volunteers of hunger, as are the "volunteers" for the Spanish adventure today.

The recent increases in wage scales have proved a wholly inadequate measure, and it is significant that the Fascist press has suddenly stopped playing them up as a great boon to the workers. A rise of from 10 to 12 per cent in wages is obviously not to be compared with a 40 per cent increase in the cost of living. In many cases employers have succeeded in evading the expense of the wage increases by dismissing their older workers and replacing them with young men at a lower rate of pay. Foreigners seeeking to gain an idea of the true conditions in Italy should take the trouble to visit the soldiers' barracks at meal times, where they will see long queues of half-starved, ragged civilians begging the soldiers for a piece of bread or a cup of soup.

The general poverty and resulting decline in tax returns have placed local authorities in serious financial straits, and every possible source of income is exploited for all it is worth. Heavy fines are imposed for every conceivable offense. A favorite method of raising money is to exact large sums from merchants who refuse to deal in goods the sale price of which has been newly fixed by the authorities at a level that would rob the merchants of any profit.

DALMO CARNEVALI

Berlin, Germany, September 1

West Coast Vigilantism

Dear Sirs: Thirty Filipino agricultural workers who were picking hops in the Mexee district of the Yakima valley, in the state of Washington, asked recently for a raise of twenty-five cents per hundred pounds. Whereupon all thirty were forced to pack their belongings and ordered out of the valley. Yakima officers and state patrolmen followed them to the Kittitas county line and warned them not to return. The hop pickers had been getting $1.75 per hundred pounds, and few picked more than 130 pounds.

Resolutions protesting against this unjustified outrage have been sent by the Yakima local of the Cannery and Agricultural Workers to President Roosevelt, Governor Martin, the La Follette committee, and the National Labor Relations Board. This unlawful action has also been condemned in messages to the governor and the press by the Washington Commonwealth Federation, the Workers' Alliance, the Maritime Federation, and Hugh de Lacy, Seattle councilman. Organized labor and civil-liberty groups cannot afford to permit Yakima's vigilantism to pass unchallenged lest it establish a precedent dangerous to the principles of freedom and democracy.

W. R. ROBINSON

Yakima, Wash., September 20

Art Under the Swastika

Dear Sirs: In Munich I visited the exhibition of "degenerate" art. It is very comprehensive and instructive but cluttered with a lot of filth. The pictures are hung barbarously—against the light and in very narrow rooms. Inscriptions are everywhere, and red signs read, "Paid for by the tax pennies of German workers." Scrawled with chalk on the frames is the place each picture came from. The sculptures are covered with dust and fingerprints. Lehmbruck's Kneeling Woman has been broken in the middle and at the feet and carelessly fastened together.

If you overlook such barbarities, which isn't easy, the exhibition is magnificent. You can see almost everything of importance that has been done in the last thirty years. People crowd through the entrance in an uninterrupted stream. I heard a few laughing and making silly

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comments, but the majority were serious and impressed, and angered by the conditions.

What is to be seen there? Nolde, Otto Müller, Kirchner, Heckel—each with some fifteen or twenty pictures. Magical Klees, the finest Kokoschkas, late Corinths, each more beautiful than the other. The Blue Horses and some others of Franz Marc's, Campendonck's Sindelsdorf, Schmidt-Rottluff, Rohlfs, Belling, Archipenko, Kandinsky, Baumeister, Schlemmer, George Grosz, Dix, Gies's Christ (barbarously hung in front of a glaring red curtain), wonderful Feiningers—I need not go on. Everybody of importance is there; only Macke, curiously enough, was not represented. One room was closed, and I was told that the Munich artists hung there—Schrimpf, Caspar, and the others. If the arrangements weren't so shameful, if things were properly displayed, the exhibition would be of bewildering beauty.

I should like to go again; there was so much to see. But you struggle in vain against the blinding light, and you can't step back from a picture because the rooms are so narrow. The sculptures are placed too low and the paintings are hung too high. Many of the pictures are those we have long held sacred. The last room especially, which happens to contain almost nothing but first-class things—among them the Lehmbruck—is like a sanctuary.

ELIZABETH BERRY

Paris, August 10

Material Wanted

Dear Sirs: Readers of *The Nation* who have any letters, documents, leaflets, or photographs dealing with the Haymarket or the Sacco-Vanzetti case are asked to communicate with the *Labor Defender,* 80 East Eleventh Street, New York, which is preparing a special memorial issue to honor the memory of these martyrs to the cause of American labor.

SASHA SMALL, Editor

New York, September 11

Perilous Times

Dear Sirs: I began reading *The Nation* in September, 1898, but your issue of September 18, 1937, contains matter far more important to the world today and in the future than any issue heretofore, 1914 not excepted. The articles entitled Pirates and British Policy, War—East and West, Neutrality—a Dangerous Myth, and The Aggressive Good Neighbor far exceed in real importance any that I have read in preceding issues.

Frankly we are in perilous times; the whole world is in turmoil; fear walks everywhere on the globe. The nations of Europe appear to be tottering on the edge of the abyss. War now exists there to a most alarming extent, and dark clouds of war hang over the rest of the world. In this critical hour it is a comfort to have such reliable and world-wide information reach us each week as *The Nation* brings.

R. L. GODWIN

Dunn, N. C., September 21

From Candidate O'Brien

Dear Sirs: As a subscriber to *The Nation* for many years, I want to congratulate you and your correspondent, Joel Seidman, upon the very clear and accurate picture you have given of the personnel and issues in the coming Detroit city election (*The Nation* of September 11). I should also like to thank you sincerely for your very kind references to myself, labor's candidate for mayor.

This is the first time in the history of Detroit that labor and the liberal forces have presented a group of candidates for a city election. I believe that our election will be not merely of local but of national significance as a step in consolidating labor and liberal forces for militant action in the political field.

PATRICK H. O'BRIEN

Detroit, September 20

Indignant Readers' Union

Dear Sirs: Publicity is one of labor's most urgent needs. With reaction better organized and more articulate than ever before, labor should make use of every channel open to it for presenting its aims and desires to the public and obtaining the approval of the middle class. If labor has no funds for advertising, it need not lose heart. There is still space in most newspapers for the publication of letters to the editor. Labor—and progressives and liberals as well—should answer adverse editorials, articles, and advertisements if it wishes to preserve its rights.

Single answers, however, would not have the effectiveness of an organized campaign. What I should like to see, therefore, is an organization of liberals who are able to write sensible letters. An organized group of active, intelligent letter-writers could do much more to advance urgent economic, social, and political reforms than many half-hearted, individual, hit-or-miss attempts. Who will take the lead in promoting such a movement?

ARTHUR SCHENKEL

Brooklyn, N. Y., September 16

CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN GROTH, formerly art editor of *Esquire,* will contribute to *The Nation,* beginning next week, a regular feature entitled Behind the Enemy Lines.

FREDA UTLEY is the author of "Japan's Feet of Clay."

HAROLD J. LASKI, professor of political science at the London School of Economics, is the author of "The Rise of European Liberalism."

I. F. STONE is an editorial writer on the New York *Post.*

HARRY LEVIN is a Minnesotan who has previously written for *The Nation.*

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH, formerly an editor of *The Nation,* is now professor of English literature at Columbia University and *The Nation's* drama critic.

MAXWELL GEISMAR is a member of the English Department of Sarah Lawrence College.

EDWARD LEVINSON is labor editor of the New York *Post* and author of "I Break Strikes: The Technique of Pearl L. Bergoff."

PHILIP RAHV is one of the editors of the *Partisan Review,* a radical literary journal.

JOSEPHINE HERBST, author of "The Executioner Waits," has recently returned from an extended visit in Spain.

HORACE GREGORY has long had a special interest in Irish history. He will publish shortly a study of the traditions behind modern literature entitled "Makers and Ancestors."

INFORMATION FOR SUBSCRIBERS

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